

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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BANK AFFAIR.

Bolt-court, 4. July, 1833.

It is very hard to say, *to-day*, what this affair will be *to-morrow*; and no human being can tell what it will be at last. The *legal tender*, which was the main provision of the project, is a good deal demolished, seeing, that five-pound Bank of England notes are not to be a legal tender; and that, therefore, country bankers and all other persons, will be unable to refuse payments in gold, if the amount be not above five-pounds. This will prevent *money changers* being stationed with little tables at markets and fairs, as they are in Russia, and as our Saviour found the wretches in the Temple of JERUSALEM. But, it still leaves a *legal tender*; it still proclaims, that the bill of 1819, commonly called PEELE's bill, can never be carried into full effect; it still proclaims, that the King is to enjoy his prerogative of making money in co-partnership with the Bank; it still proclaims, that the nation is unable to pay its debts in the King's coin; it still proclaims, that those who have deposited ten pounds or more in the Savings Bank, *in gold*, shall be compelled to take the deposit out again *in paper*; and it still lays the foundation for a superstructure of *assignats*. That part of the project which related to country banks, and joint-stock banks, appears to have been withdrawn for the present. And, indeed, no one can yet tell what is to be withdrawn, and what is

to be left, belonging to the whole project; and, therefore, I shall say no more about it at the present.

ENGLISH TITHE PROJECT.

THIS project, which was downright madness, has, in fact, been *abandoned*; for, we are now told, that a law is to be passed on the subject, without any *compulsory* clause in it! If the law had been passed as it was intended, there would have been, in many parts of the country, an almost general confiscation of estates. That part of the aristocracy to whom the church principally belongs, would have taken away a large part of the landed property of all other persons; and, instead of a *tithe of the increase*, would have taken away, at once, a fifth or sixth part of the land, or of its rental, which is the same thing. What the people wanted was, an abolition of tithes, and the imposition of no burden in their stead, the tithes having ceased to produce those services to the people which they were intended to produce. This is what the people were looking for; and they were to have had precisely the contrary of this. Now, *nothing*, in reality, is to be done: the thing is to go on, every man's mind unsettled upon the subject; all in a state of uncertainty as to what is to come. The people and the clergy, both alike in a state of apprehension and irritation; and the settlement reserved, in all human probability, *never to be made*; and the church to be new-modelled, or totally destroyed, after some convulsive movement, produced by the paper-money.

In answer to all the propositions that have ever been made for reforming things in England; for restoring the rights and liberties of the people, and for bringing them back to that state of happiness which their fathers enjoyed: in answer to all the propositions of this

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sort, this answer has been given: "A country, which has so far departed from its laws, its settled institutions, its political and moral condition, *never was yet known to retrograde* quietly; never was yet known to *retrace its steps*; never was yet known to go back and return to anything resembling its former state of liberty and happiness, without first undergoing a *convulsive revolution*; never was yet known to *amend* in the smallest degree; but always, first to pull down, and then to build up again." This is what Major CARTWRIGHT was always told; this is what I have been told a thousand times. I have hitherto entertained doubts upon the subject: my *wishes* have always been the other way: I had some expectation that this reform of the Parliament could have made those wishes become *hope*; but, as *hope* cannot exist without some foundation to rest upon, I must confess, that the expectation now begins to disappear. I can see nothing, likely to be done, or likely to be attempted, to prevent that which I have always looked upon as the inevitable result of a perseverance in this present system of standing armies in time of peace, of barracks, of Bourbon police, of Government by force, and of fiscal exaction, becoming every day more and more burdensome. Not the smallest step has been taken; not the slightest movement has been made towards an alteration of this system; and, all that the most zealous, and most intelligent man can do, is to endeavour, not to mitigate the evils of the system (for that is utterly impracticable); but, to enable the people to see what the system really is, in order that they may know by whom and by what their sufferings have been occasioned; and that, under all circumstances, they may be induced to act sensibly and justly. At this present moment they are without any hope of a quiet settlement of affairs; and the thing to do is, to cause them to understand of what description that settlement ought to be, and to teach them the part which they ought to act in their endeavours to bring it about. This is

all that can be done at present; and this, as far as I am able, I shall contribute my share in accomplishing. With regard to the church, it cannot remain as it is: the Dissenters, with good reason on their side, and now become so numerous, in proportion to the followers of the church, can no longer be kept quiet. They are daily endeavouring to shake off detached parcels of the burden. Every day some stone or other is knocked out from the pillars that support the fabric; but still I think that the fabric will not come down as long as the paper-money will pass. Three things were born at one and the same time: this church, the paper-system, and the boroughmougering system. Like the SIAMESE children, if you give one a blow, the other instantly feels it. All have had a blow; but all are still alive; they were all born together, and they will all die together, and be buried in one and the same grave. The paper-money child is the most ticklish of the three; by far the most sensitive; and, live without it, neither of the others can for a single hour. A general run for gold (no matter from what cause); or, a dwindling down into *assignats*, destroys the whole of the three in a moment. However, we must drawl along yet awhile, and the utmost that we can do is, to prepare ourselves for the ultimate consequences, since the resolution seems to have been taken not to take one single step towards bringing things back to any thing like their former state.

NATIONAL DEBT.

ON Tuesday evening last Mr. BUCKINGHAM, the member for SHEFFIELD, moved a resolution in the House of Commons, the objects of which were, *first*, to change the nature of the claims of the fundholders, without diminishing the amount of those claims; and *second*, to throw the burden of paying the interest upon the proprietors of real property, taking off the taxes which press immediately upon the industrious part

of the people. As Mr. BUCKINGHAM moved for a committee to inquire, I seconded his motion, which I should have done (seeing no other start up to do it) had there been nothing to induce me, beyond the very great ingenuity and cleverness of his speech.

In the course of that speech, he stated the objections which had been made to the validity of the claims of the fundholders: and, amongst others, he said, "that some had contended that the men of the present day were not bound to pay debts, which were contracted before they were born, especially as they were imposed by Parliaments not elected by the people." I said, that I was one of those who held the opinion, that no Parliament had a right to pass a law to make the child pay the debts of the father, the father having left the child nothing to pay with; and that, upon the same principle, no generation of men had a right to contract debts and to bind their successors to pay them; and that it was an act of injustice heretofore unheard of in the world, for a nation to borrow money and to squander it away, and to doom the children in the cradle to work like slaves all their lives to pay the interest of the debt, when there was nothing left to them which was purchased with the money so borrowed. That, in this case, there was, moreover, the circumstance, that the money had been borrowed by the borough people, without any assent on the part of the people at large; and that, therefore, if the fundholders had a claim on the successors of the borrowers, the claim could not extend to the industrious part of the community, whose fathers had had no hand at all in the borrowing; and that, if "*national faith*" did demand the payment, the payment ought to come out of the estates of the borrowers or their successors.

Mr. BUCKINGHAM had mentioned a *graduated property tax*, which I had called "*confiscation*." Lord ALTHORP, in answer to Mr. BUCKINGHAM, repeated this opinion of mine. Upon this I said, that I, having one acre of land, and you having a thousand acres of land, held that you ought to pay a

thousand times as much tax as I; but no more: that, if I took more from you, I should be unjust, and take it by force. That to make a man pay more for his second acre than for the first acre, and so on, would be to impose a punishment on skill, frugality, sobriety, and good moral character; that it would punish the man who had got together a little estate by his industry, in order to bring him down to a level with him who had not; and that, whoever had witnessed the effects of this unnatural sort of equality, would never endeavour to introduce it. But this was not an evil, of which, God knows, we in England have to complain. Our complaint was, and mine, in particular, that a system of confiscation was going on against the poor in favour of the rich. I complained, that the widow of the poor man, who left fifty-one pounds even in a *savings bank*, had to pay six or seven pounds of it in probate and administration tax, while the widow of a man leaving a landed estate worth a million of money, had not one farthing to pay in that tax. This was my complaint; this complaint I would never cease to urge, until the wrong should be redressed.

Mr. HARVEY, Mr. HUME, and Colonel EVANS, spoke after me. What each of them said is worthy of great attention, and worthy of being remembered. We certainly seem to be coming to something like right notions upon this subject. I will insert the report of these gentlemen's speeches as it was given in the *Morning Chronicle* of Wednesday. The report is by no means perfect, but it is as perfect as one could reasonably expect. Perhaps I shall make a remark or two after I have inserted the report.

"Mr. D. W. HARVEY said, the noble Lord had very eagerly seized the observations of an honourable Member with respect to a graduated property tax. He had frequently observed a disposition on the part of official gentlemen to steer clear of the point immediately before the House, in order to throw imputations upon their opponents. Notwithstanding the re-

" marks of this kind which had been
 " made on the subject of a graduated
 " property tax, he did not feel disposed
 " to deviate from the opinion which he
 " had before expressed. A tax ought
 " not to be imposed merely in propor-
 " tion to income; but attention should
 " be paid to the amount which would
 " be left to the party paying the tax.
 " The income of a person having
 " 20,000*l.* or 30,000*l.* a year would still
 " remain much superior, after a greater
 " proportionate deduction than that of
 " the man of moderate fortune. If they
 " imposed a tax of 1*l.* on the man who
 " had 100*l.* a year, he thought the man
 " who had 1,000*l.* a year ought to pay
 " 100*l.*; he who had 10,000*l.* a year
 " ought to pay 1,000*l.*; and he who had
 " 50,000*l.* a year might pay 10,000*l.*
 " They would still have the same rela-
 " tive rank—and with his 99*l.*, another
 " with 900*l.*, another with 9,000*l.*, and
 " another with 40,000*l.* But it was
 " supposed that he wished to bring all
 " property into the general crucible of
 " confiscation. *The Radicals were ac-*
 " *cused of wishing to apply a sponge*
 " *to the national debt; but he repu-*
 " *diated the idea of any such course for*
 " *relieving the burdens of the country.*
 " He considered the fundholders en-
 " titled to receive every farthing of the
 " debt; and where were they to get it
 " but *from the property of the country?*
 " So far from funded property being
 " less secure than other sorts of property,
 " he considered that no *other species was*
 " *so well secured.* The interest amount-
 " ed to 28,000,000*l.*, and that charge
 " was secured upon an actual rental of
 " 40,000,000*l.* or 50,000,000*l.* If it
 " could once be shown that the property
 " on which the charge was secured was
 " not worth 28,000,000*l.* a year, then it
 " might be necessary to consider what
 " was to be done; but at present the
 " fundholder stood upon the *same foot-*
 " *ing as other mortgagees.* If they had
 " chosen to borrow money to carry
 " through their freaks and fancies, the
 " interest which had chosen to do so
 " was of course bound to pay the money.
 " (Hear, hear). They had spent the
 " money for the protection of church

" and state; and he congratulated them
 " on the continued possession of both.
 " (A laugh). They had proved rather
 " costly; but one of them, the church,
 " was of unmeasurable value. (Conti-
 " nued laughter). It was for church
 " and state that the landed interest
 " had contracted the national debt, and
 " had thus mortgaged their property.
 " If they did not choose to pay the
 " charge which they had incurred, they
 " had only to walk out and put the
 " fundholders, like other mortgagees, in
 " possession. (Hear, hear, and laughter).
 " He was convinced that many persons
 " who pretended to be alarmed at the
 " idea of the application of a sponge to
 " the national debt, were really glad to
 " hear the Radicals talk of such a pro-
 " ceeding. The Tories, he was per-
 " suaded, liked to hear it. It was like
 " the case of tithes. Half of them
 " would be glad to wipe away those
 " charges, and to reap the benefit of it;
 " but he hoped the Radicals would not
 " pursue any such course. The charge
 " was one upon the property of the king-
 " dom; and while vessels were going
 " out to all parts of the world groaning
 " with their burdens, the property of the
 " country was well able to bear the
 " charge. Let those noblemen and
 " gentlemen who had imposed the charge
 " go to Canada, or elsewhere, and
 " let the mortgagees enter upon their
 " estates. (Hear, hear). This is genuine
 " law. (A laugh). He wished for in-
 " quiry—not to enlighten the House,
 " for that could not be done (laughter);
 " but because it might enable them to
 " enlighten the darkness which was
 " abroad. He was quite satisfied that
 " the more these principles were pro-
 " pounded, the more they were exposed
 " to public consideration, the more like-
 " ly they were to lead to that just arbi-
 " trament which the motion of his hon.
 " Friend was meant to bring about.
 " Mr. HUME said he was of opinion
 " that those who had incurred the debt
 " ought to pay the charges arising from
 " it, and that it ought not to be paid by
 " those who had no hand in contracting
 " it, many of whom were unborn at the
 " time of its being contracted. The

" principal load of the debt ought to be borne by that property of which the owners were mainly instrumental in contracting it. He agreed with the hon. Member for Oldham, that the labouring classes ought not be burdened beyond their due proportion; but that the load should be borne in a greater degree by the landed property, for the protection of which the debt was contracted, although it is now, comparatively speaking, exempted from taxation. From 39,000,000*l.* to 40,000,000*l.*, out of the 50,000,000*l.* were raised from the industry of the country, and paid by men who earned their bread by the sweat of their brow, while the remaining 10,000,000*l.* only were paid by the higher classes. The poor man, who earned only 2*s.* or 3*s.* a day, was taxed at the rate of 50 per cent., while the rich man with 10,000*l.* paid only 15 or 20 per cent. That was the great grievance; and if, as was admitted, it had become absolutely necessary to relieve the industry of the country, it must be done by such an entire change in the system of taxation as would relieve the poor man from its pressure, and leave the moveable capital of the country, by which employment is furnished, unburdened. They would thus put an end to that emigration which was daily draining the country of its industry and of its best blood. He was strongly disposed to the principle of perpetuities; and if the debt had been contracted for an annuity to continue even 100 years, there would at least have been a prospect of its gradual extinction. It was well known that money might have been obtained on terms very little higher than were required for perpetual annuities. If they wished to perpetuate the dominion of England, they must adopt some measure of terminable annuities.

" Colonel EVANS said a great outcry was raised against a graduated property tax, as a measure of spoliation, because the proportion was to vary; but there was a species of tax in which a graduated scale was adopted, and which hon. members did not appear

" to look upon as a measure of spoliation, he supposed, because it was graduated inversely as the property of the payers, and operated consequently, in favour of the rich. He spoke of the window tax, with respect to which he had heard no cry of spoliation raised. The question of the continuance of that tax was one of great importance in London and Westminster; and since a graduated scale was considered so heinous, he hoped that consideration would operate with hon. Members in the case of the assessed taxes."

These three were amongst the very best speeches that have been made this Parliament. Nothing can be more correct than that which was said by all these three gentlemen. It is very easy for those to cry "*national faith*," who impose the burden upon others: very pleasant for the landowner to cry "*national faith*" to the savings-bank man, while he impounds the property left to the poor fellow, until it has paid its share, of the national debt, while the landed estate, which has come to himself, has paid not one single farthing towards the discharge of that debt. I agree with Mr. HARVEY and with Mr. HUME, that, if this debt be to be paid in gold of full weight and fineness, and in full tale, it ought to be paid by those for whose benefit, for whose pleasure, in our views, of some sort or another, it was contracted; and, at any rate, never would I give my consent to deduct one single farthing from the interest of the debt, until the aristocracy and the church, and "*sister-services*" had been made to give up every farthing that they take out of the taxes, without adequate services fully and duly rendered, and until the crown and corporation estates had been brought to book; and, if these were done, the oppressive internal taxes might be taken off, and the fundholders made more secure and better off than they are now; and the whole debt might be paid and satisfied in a very short space of time.

I am very glad that this discussion took place. It is the first time that common sense has been applied to this

subject in Parliament. We now understand, that it is unjust to doom the child in the cradle to be a slave all its life, on account of a debt contracted by former generations, and in the contracting of which the forefathers of that child had nothing at all to do.

ACQUITTAL OF FURZEY.

GEORGE FURZEY, of WALWORTH, was tried yesterday, at the OLD BAILEY, on a charge of having stabbed a policeman at the *Calthorpe-street* Meeting. The trial lasted the whole of the day, and, as far as I can learn (it is now 5 o'clock, Friday morning), the whole of the night. It was a Government prosecution and conducted by Mr. Solicitor-General. Mr. CHARLES PHILLIPS, with Mr. CLARKSON, were for the poor man; and well they did their duty. The thanks of every just man in this whole kingdom are due to these gentlemen. Mr. PHILLIPS is not bodily a strong man; and this day's work, in such an atmosphere, was enough to halfkill any man living. I owe Mr. PHILLIPS an expression of my gratitude, for his most able and zealous conducting of my cause against the *old Times*; but, sincere and great as my gratitude is on this account, it is small, indeed, compared with the gratitude which I owe him for his defence of this poor man. My *English Grammar*, addressed to one of my sons, I conclude in these words: "Never esteem men merely on account of their riches or their station. Respect goodness, find it where you may. Honour talent wherever you behold it unassociated with vice; but, honour it most when accompanied with exertion, and especially when exerted in the cause of truth and justice; and, above all things, hold it in honour, when it steps forward to protect defenceless innocence against the attacks of powerful guilt."

Let the public recollect; let the public NEVER FORGET the following infamous paragraph, inserted in the *Morning Chronicle* about ten days ago:

"THE MURDER OF CULLEY THE POLICEMAN.—[From a Correspondent.]—It is *confidently* stated that *Furzey*, who has been committed to Newgate on the capital charge of having stabbed two policemen at the late Coldbath-fields Meeting, is *clearly identified* by a *disinterested* witness as the *murderer* of the unfortunate *Culley*. The person alluded to *was taken*, a few days since, to the prison of Newgate, and *selected Furzey* from among several other prisoners as being the person *whom he had seen give the fatal blow*, and he is to appear at the trial of the prisoner at the ensuing Old Bailey Sessions to *prove the facts*." WHO was this infamous correspondent? Or did the brutal editor of that paper, who is daily endeavouring to cause a *gendarmerie* to be sent into the villages of England, and who is daily endeavouring to pave the way for the destruction of trial by jury; is he himself the author of this atrocious libel on poor FURZEY. at whose *blood* this infamous paragraph was directly aimed? We shall probably see who was the real author of this: we shall see whether there be no law for this poor man, who is a man of exemplary industry, sobriety, and inoffensiveness; we shall see whether an infamous newspaper is thus with impunity to aim this blow at his life.

In consequence of the petition which was presented last week, relative to POPAY the policeman, a committee has been appointed to inquire into the matter, of which committee I am one.

ANNA BRODIE AND CO.

A LONDON jury has determined that this set is not to continue to pour out libels upon me; and that I am not to be called "an uncertificated bankrupt" with impunity. A hundred pounds damages and the costs will make this crew remember that there is some limit to their right of assailing me, at any

rate. I said, when I brought this action, that I did it for the honour of my constituents, and not on account of myself. The people of this paper ought to have been punished long ago, for their atrocious publications relative to THOMAS GOODMAN and the men who were punished on account of the fires; and there is a fellow in Wales whom I will punish if he do not retract what he has said upon the same subject. The thing to which I allude is called the "*Merthyr Tydvil Guardian*," printed and published by WILLIAM MALLALIEU. The public may recollect, that I some time ago presented a petition from the working men of MERTHYR TYDVIL; and, because the men thought proper to send their petition to me and not to Mr. GUEST, they are threatened with starvation, and I am libelled in the following atrocious manner, the public being told, through this vile paper, that "*not a few of the misguided men who suffered the penalty of the law, during the agricultural disturbances, acknowledged, that their first incentive to unlawful proceedings, was, Mr. COBBETT's writings, or Mr. COBBETT's lecture.*" I verily believe, that the poor creature who publishes this is not the real *author* of it. I publish it that my readers may hold both author and publisher in detestation; and this is not all that I will do to the publisher, in whose paper this appeared on the 29. of June, leaving him in the meanwhile to the contempt and detestation of his townsmen.

(From the *Merthyr Tydvil Guardian*, 29. June.)

The latest intelligence of which we were in possession when our last number went to press informed us that a petition had been presented by Mr. COBBETT, which was "signed by 9,910 working men of Merthyr Tydvil, who complained of the inadequacy of their wages to purchase provisions in consequence of excessive taxation, and prayed the repeal of the malt, hops, soap, &c. taxes, and particularly of the corn laws." The subject matter of this petition is of such importance

and extensive interest; and certain circumstances connected with the petition so naturally call forth some useful observations, that we think it necessary to advert to the subject more fully than we could have done at the time at which it first came under our notice.

The first remark that we would make is, that it seems to us singular that a petition on such a subject, and so extensively signed in Merthyr, should have been intrusted to any other hands than those of our own honourable Representative. Every man, of whatever party, who has the least knowledge of Merthyr or of the iron trade, must be sensible of the high claims that Mr. GUEST has upon the confidence, and even gratitude, of the persons who signed this petition. His great iron-works at Dowlais are a proof, by night and by day, of the thousands to whom his capital affords employment, and consequently subsistence; and the rate of wages at which he employs his men is, we believe, even more liberal than he is of necessity compelled to pay. We have frequently enjoyed the pleasure of recording instances of his private benevolence, and of his active exertions in the promotion of public objects of a benevolent tendency. And we ask every one of the 10,000 men who signed this petition, if he can forget the humane and courageous interposition, by which Mr. GUEST saved the lives probably of hundreds of misguided men in the Merthyr riots? And we ask these petitioners only one question more. Can they reconcile it to themselves to show to this gentleman the marked disrespect which it seems they have shown him in thus passing over their *own chosen* Representative, and committing their petition to a stranger? We, who on political subjects, differ with Mr. GUEST, say this; and we say it because we value "*Y gwir yn erbyn y byd*;" and our politics are made of sounder stuff than to stand only by underrating the merits of our opponents.

But, if we point out the marked deviation from good feeling which is evinced in this, we do it for a useful object. The hon. Gentleman to whom

this petition was intrusted, not only has no claim upon the respect of the men of Merthyr, but the uniform course of his political life has been that of a person striving to ingratiate himself with the people, not for their good, but for his own advancement. From first to last we have seen him fawning upon the working classes, cramming them with flattering notions of their own importance, exciting them to a hatred of the rich, and working upon the great mass of the people, till he makes them the blind and headstrong instruments of his own purposes. Not a few of the misguided men, who suffered the penalty of the law during the "agricultural disturbances," acknowledged that their first incentive to unlawful proceedings was Mr. COBBETT's writings, or Mr. COBBETT's lecture: and we ask, where was the common sense of the men of Merthyr, who did not see that the Orator, fine-spoken Orator as he was, who "moved the resolutions," was only bringing *them* also into COBBETT's net? It is a *wise saying* that, old friends are best.

But there is one thing more in this petition, and it is the thing prayed for. The petitioners say that their wages are inadequate to purchase provisions, in consequence of taxation; and they pray the repeal of certain taxes, and of the corn laws. If the wages are inadequate, it is a thing which all good men deplore; a thing which we would make great exertion to remedy. But the petitioners must be sensible that wages depend upon price; that no man, for instance, could give 6s. wages to make a thing which he must sell for 5s. They must be sensible also, that their case of a fall of wages in late years is not a singular, but a general one: and that the prices of all things, and consequently the wages of the working classes in every line, are falling by the operations of what are falsely called free trade, is a position which we will explain before long. But it rests with themselves whether their condition shall or shall not be materially worse than it is; inasmuch as when tumultuous meetings take place, when political unions col-

lect, when large bodies of the people open a correspondence with COBBETT, ATTWOOD, O'CONNELL, and such people; rich men keep their money in their pockets, instead of spending it in shops or employing it in manufactures. Our towns-people must remember that in other times, when taxes have been much higher, the working classes were well paid and lived well; and that now, although taxes have fallen greatly, they are in much worse condition. This we put it to the fine orator who moved the resolutions, to expound to them, and till he do so, perhaps the petitioners will doubt whether the taxation of the country be really so much the cause of their depressed condition as he represents. And when our brethren of the working classes of Merthyr petition for the repeal of the corn laws, we ask, did ever man hear of one side of a house being made the stronger by pulling down the wall at the other? But this is precisely what they would do; inasmuch as the corn laws alone preserve the agricultural body: and if that body fail, the manufacturing must be without employment. To unravel the complexities in which our commercial circumstances are entangled is a task of great power of mind, great perseverance of exertion, and unruffled patience. On this noble pursuit the sincere but unpretending friends of the people are seriously intent: and we put it feelingly to the honest, though misguided, men who have signed this petition, not to adopt a course which must alarm the rich, and take away the employment of the poor: not to raise political commotion, which must draw off attention from the embarrassments of trade: not to degrade themselves into the mere human prey of political agitators either at home or abroad.

**BROUGHAM'S
POOR-LAW COMMISSION,
AND**

THE FALSEHOODS LAID BEFORE PARLIAMENT, UNDER THE SIGNATURE OF THE PERSONS COMPOSING THAT COMMISSION.

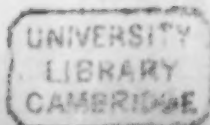
FROM the first moment of the appointment of this commission, I expressed my opinion, that its tendency was of a most mischievous nature. The Bishops of LONDON and CHESTER stand at the head of the commissioners. Every one must know that it is impossible that these bishops should be able to enter into any such inquiries. Next comes STURGES BOURNE, the author of those bills which have produced so much mischief throughout the country, and which have been petitioned against by so many parishes. Next comes SENIOR, a man who has written, over and over again, to maintain the doctrines of Parson MALTHUS. Next comes COULSTON, who was a newspaper-reporter some time ago; who is, I believe, a relation of SENIOR, and who is a disciple of the same school. We have no written proof of HARRY GAWLER's opinions, that I know of; and there is now another man of the name of BISHOP, of whom I have never heard before. BROUGHAM said, in 1819, "that he was prepared to defend the principles of MALTHUS to their full extent;" and that full extent was, *to refuse parochial relief altogether*. He pledged himself, the session before last, to bring in a new poor-law. I defied him to do it, the moment he gave the pledge; and, instead of bringing in a poor-law, he and his colleagues appointed this poor-law commission to obtain *information upon the subject*.

These commissioners sit in London, it seems, and send forth roving deputy-commissioners to collect information about the country. These rovers give in written accounts of the result of their inquiries. A parcel of *extracts* from these accounts have been collected together, printed in the form of an octavo book, and sold at *price four shillings*, "PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY"; and, the

members of the House of Commons have each of them been furnished with a copy of this book. This is a new way of doing the nation's business. We have never before heard of a published book, price so much, being laid upon the table of the House of Commons. We have never before heard of a public board turning authors, especially with a couple of bishops at its head, and selling its books. However, we have the book; and, so scandalous a thing has seldom appeared in the shape of a book. It is evident, that the book is intended to pave the way for calling upon Parliament to pass a law to do the following things:

1. To set aside the authority of the present justices of the peace, as far, at any rate, as relates to the management of the poor.
2. To make STURGES BOURNE's Bills compulsory, and to extend their effects all over England and Wales.
3. To cause MALTHUS's plan of refusal of relief to be adopted.
4. To put down the present sort of justices of the peace altogether; to supply their places by *hired* justices appointed immediately by the Government.
5. To put down all the present peace-officers of counties and parishes, and to establish all over Great Britain, a *Bourbon-police*, with commissioners, superintendents, inspectors, sergeants, and privates, just such as we have the misery and disgrace to have in London.

These are manifestly the objects of this book; and to accomplish these objects, the roving commissioners have resorted to falsehoods the most glaring. I insert below, first, a petition from the town of HORSHAM, in Sussex; and, second, "An Inquiry into the merits of the Poor-law Report, by the Rev. HARRY F. YEATMAN," who is also a magistrate for the county of Dorset. In presenting the HORSHAM petition, Mr. HURST, who resides in the parish, vouched for the truth of the petition, and for the falsehood of the rovers' report. Mr. YEATMAN examines the report of another of the rovers, publishes



his examination in the shape of a pamphlet, puts his name in the title-page of his pamphlet, and he exposes such a tissue of falsehoods, and such glaring instances of foul dealing, as must, one would think, make the two bishops blush at the thought of having put their names to such a book. I do beseech my readers, particularly those of the *political unions*, to read these documents with the greatest possible attention. The Whig scheme of subjecting England to a *Bourbon-police government*, will be blown into air; but let us, my friends, never forget the *design*! I am very much obliged to the person who has sent me the pamphlet of the Rev. Mr. YEATMAN; the whole nation is indebted to him for making this timely exposure; and it will, doubtless, rouse the people to call for an end of the expenses of this Poor-law Commission.

It is the accursed *Doctrinaires* that are at work here; those horrible devils who regard the working people as merely made to keep them in idleness. These merciless miscreants perceive that the working people in the country are now better off than they were before the riots; one of the *rovers* says, *that the working people of Sussex have been used to live too high*. The general tone of the book is, that the working people now get *too much*, and that they get it by INTIMIDATION; and that, therefore, there ought to be a *Bourbon police government* throughout the country. The book discovers this settled design. The working people are better off: they do get a greater portion of relief; the magistrates and the gentlemen are satisfied that they ought to have it, and they say so: this clergyman, to his very great honour, says, that the riots arose out of the very severe sufferings of the people: it appears that the whole bench of magistrates at the quarter sessions in Dorsetshire, set their faces against the cruel doctrine preached there by this roving commissioner; and, just at the time when the rich and the poor all about the country, are getting somewhat reconciled to one another, comes out this poor-law book; this MALTHU-

SIAN scheme for plunging all into confusion and enveloping all in flames again. Once more I recommend these two documents to the attentive perusal of my readers. It will be my duty to endeavour to put an end to this new drain upon the people's pockets; and I trust, that I shall find the people to support me in this my endeavour; and that support they can give in no way so effectually as by their *petitions*: and I beg all those who may read this, never to listen to those who would persuade them to cease to petition. This is the arm which the people have: it is the sensible and effectual, as well as the lawful arm: it causes them very little trouble to use it; and, if they will not take that trouble, how are they to expect that a man will spend half his life in order to obtain them redress.

The humble petition of the parish of Horsham, in the county of Sussex, rated for the relief of the poor of the said parish,

Showeth,—That your petitioners have read with considerable surprise and concern, the report of Mr. Maclean, comprised in the General Report of the Poor-Law Commissioners, of which the following is an extract: viz. "The rates are called fourteen shillings in the pound, upon an assessment called and supposed to be two-thirds on land, but not above one-fifth upon houses. During the disturbances of the winter of 1830, very serious riots took place here, the effects of which are felt up to the present time, not only in the increase of the rates, but in the disaffected and malicious conduct of the lower classes. The more respectable inhabitants live in continual dread of the destruction of their property."

That your petitioners, having regard for the poor inhabitants of their parish, and being anxious to remove so uncalculated, unmerited, and unjust a stigma, thus publicly cast upon them, beg most humbly to represent to your honourable House, that such report, so far as the same is extracted, is wholly unfounded in fact.

That, although (as your petitioners are ready to admit), in the winter of 1830, a numerous meeting of the poorer classes took place in this parish, yet your petitioners assert that no serious riot was the result, nor was such meeting followed either by the destruction of life or property, as (it is to be regretted) was the case in many other parishes; that, therefore, to denounce the conduct of the poor of this parish as disaffected and malicious, is

equally as base a denouncement, as that your petitioners live in continual dread of the destruction of their property, is false and unfounded.

That the conduct of the poor since the winter of 1830, and down to the present time, your petitioners beg leave to state to your honourable House, has been any thing but disaffected and malicious; that they have at all times evinced a disposition to work when it could be obtained.

That such report, untruly representing as it does the conduct of the poor of this parish as disaffected and malicious, is, in the opinion of your petitioners, calculated to irritate their feelings, and rouse them to acts of insubordination.

That the rates, within the last few years, have in a trifling degree increased, your petitioners do not deny, but your petitioners attribute such increase to various causes, particularly that the farmers are unable, for want of capital, to employ a sufficient number of hands to perform the necessary work upon their farms, and not to the cause mentioned in the report.

Your petitioners, therefore, most humbly beg to submit to your honourable House, that a report so unfounded in fact, so highly prejudicial to the character of the poor of this parish, and so detrimental to the inhabitants generally, and to their property and trade, ought not to be allowed to stand upon the report of the poor-law commissioners.

Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray your honourable House to take into your consideration the propriety of the poor-law commissioners amending such report, by causing the unfounded statement to be erased from the same; your petitioners hereby undertaking to prove, either before the poor-law commissioners, or at the bar of your honourable House, that such report, so far as the same is extracted, is false and unfounded.

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

An Inquiry into the merits of the Poor-Law Report of D. O. P. Okeden, Esq., Assistant Commissioner; by the Rev. HARRY FARR YEATMAN, LL.B., acting Magistrate for Dorset and Somerset.

In perusing a document of so much importance as that of a "*report as to the administration of the poor-laws*," by commissioners appointed by the crown, the general reader will naturally expect to find that such a report is founded upon evidence of the most impartial and conclusive description, and that such evidence has been taken by the commissioners of each district in a manner the most open, circumstantial, and direct. It will be expected

that this should be the case, for the purpose of showing the "*most correct views on the working of the poor-laws generally*," and as a system; the central commissioners having been, (according to the instructions of Lord Melbourne) "directed by his Majesty's commission to make a *diligent and full inquiry* into the practical operation of the laws for the relief of the poor in England and Wales, and into the manner in which those laws are administered, and to report whether any and what alterations, amendments, or improvements, may be beneficially made in the said laws;" &c. &c.; but it will be the more especially expected that the evidence on which the reports are framed should be taken in the open and candid manner above alluded to, if it should turn out that the character of the justices of any one single division, or of any one county, has been reflected upon in those reports, and that judicial inquiry on the part of the district, or the assistant commissioner shall have led the way to judicial condemnation.

In perusing the poor-law report, addressed by D. O. P. Okeden, Esq., on the 25. of December, 1832, to his Majesty's commissioners, in his capacity as an assistant commissioner duly appointed to "inquire into the *practical operation of the poor-law system*," in this county, and which report has been "*PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY*," and referring to that particular part of it which relates to the county of Dorset, and to the Sturminster Newton division of it in particular, in which I have had the honour to act as a magistrate for the somewhat long and certainly very laborious period of full twenty years, I am forcibly and most painfully impressed with the opinion, first, *that the manner in which Mr. Okeden was pleased to collect the evidence, on which his report, touching the working of the poor-law system in the Sturminster Newton division is founded, was neither so open and accessible to the parties concerned and affected by that report as it ought to have been; secondly, that the evidence so taken by him is utterly insufficient for the purpose "of showing the PRACTICAL OPERATION" of the existing poor-law system within the aforesaid division generally, and which "practical operation" ought to have been shown by a careful comparison of parish with parish, and by sifting the system as a whole, from which some general inference might be drawn, touching the nature of that system; and not by selecting and commenting upon a few parishes in particular, carefully and studiously chosen for the purpose, as it should seem, of illustrating the peculiar views and opinions which Mr. Okeden is well known to entertain upon this important question, and which ought to have been illustrated by an analysis of the effect produced by the administration of the justices thrown over the whole surface of this division at large. In confirmation of the truth of these statements, I beg to observe that, on the day when Mr. Okeden attended the petty*

sessions at Sturminster, for the purpose of collecting such evidence as he might require from the overseers of every parish (*all of whom were summoned by myself or colleagues to give such evidence as might be required by Mr. Okeden*), that gentleman arrived at, and entered the room where a certain number of the justices, including myself, were then assembled in petty sessions; and that, after the interchange of a few words, he retired to a *private room*, as being more convenient both to him and to ourselves, and that he *there collected such information as he thought proper to require*, except that, in so far as the parish of Sturminster Newton was concerned, he asked, at our request, a certain number of questions from the overseers of that "ill-regulated parish," concerning the injudicious mode of payment to, and non-employment of, single men, and recorded the answers thereto in our immediate presence. But I beg to observe, *that the evidence on which the report of Mr. Okeden was framed, and on which as it turns out, the magistrates of the whole division have been blamed and censured by Mr. Okeden, was received and recorded in a private room, into which room the justices were not invited to enter, though at this very time they were sitting under the same roof in petty session assembled: with the nature of which evidence, or of the charges against them founded thereon, they were never made acquainted in any manner whatever, either directly or indirectly, till they saw the report, and censures on their conduct founded thereon, "published by authority," and circulating throughout the kingdom. Received too, as that evidence appears to have been, from some few individuals who were personally interested in the matter, from persons who were opposed to and dissatisfied with the orders, directions, and general practice of those magistrates; and who did, either designedly, or incidentally in the course of inquiry before Mr. Okeden, prefer a formal complaint, and a serious charge against the legal practice of those justices to which it did not appear expedient to Mr. Okeden to permit those justices to have any opportunity whatever of making their defence; upon which evidence, so taken, so recorded, unexplained, exparte, and unexamined on both sides, as it undoubtedly was, and as it ought not to have been, Mr. Okeden has thought proper to affix a certain degree of censure upon the conduct of those justices, and to permit the declaration of it to be published to the whole world. As a gentleman who is in the habit of frequenting the courts of justice in this county, and occasionally presiding in a criminal court himself, I would here beg leave to ask of Mr. Okeden, whether the practice of the judges of this*

land, or of the magistrates of this kingdom, when sitting on the bench, is, or is not, in accordance with the practice adopted by him towards the justices of the Sturminster division, on the 29. of October last; and whether it is, or is not usual to allow *persons accused*, first to know the nature of the charges which are about to be, or have been preferred against them; and secondly, whether it is not *usual*, as well as *just*, to allow such persons, in the face of their accusers, to enjoy the right and privilege of replying to those charges, and of cross-examining the evidence on which those charges have been preferred; and if Mr. Okeden's reply is likely to be, *as it must be*, in the affirmative, and in favour of their practice, I beg leave respectfully to ask him, *why he departed from that principle on the day when he received from the overseers of Hasilbury and Sturminster Newton, the evidence which appeared to him to be sufficient to accuse the justices of the Sturminster division of a maladministration of the poor-laws*, and of having, in a "singular" manner, thwarted the rector of Hasilbury Bryan, in his effort to put down that system of maladministration on their part. On the authority of this fact, affirmatively taken, I feel that I have a right to consider that myself and brother justices have been *condemned unheard*, and that too, in a manner the most repugnant to our notions of common justice, as founded upon the practice of our common courts, both of equity and law; assuming for the moment, and admitting, though only for the purposes of argument, that the evidence so taken from our accusers and calumniators was even perfectly correct, founded on fact, and incapable of contradiction. Having thus alluded to the manner in which the evidence was, in reality, taken by Mr. Okeden, whereon his report to the poor-law commissioners is founded, I now proceed to examine the *nature of that evidence*, so far as the same can be inferred from the substance of the report itself. The first parish which is named by Mr. Okeden, is that of the parish of Cranbourne; but as that parish happens to be remote and distinct from the division of Sturminster Newton, and is one for the poor-law administration of which I am not personally responsible, I shall pass on to the consideration of the next-named parish, merely observing that Mr. Okeden's report on the moral condition of Cranbourne is remarkable for the most extraordinary allusion to the presumed irregularity of practice on the part of a magistrate of that division *LATELY DECEASED*, venturing to think at the same time, that, although *the living* are subjected, in this report, to the visitations of his dispraise, yet that it might have been as well to exonerate *the dead* from the searching severities of his censure.

After making certain observations on the past and present condition of Cranbourne, Mr. Okeden next directs his attention to the parish of Hasilbury Bryan, of which parish we are presented with the following graphic description.

HASILBURY BRYAN, DORSET.

POPULATION 611.

Number of acres in the parish.

Pasture land	2,020
Arable ditto	250
Woodland ditto	27
Common ditto	150
Garden ditto	7

Total acres 2,454

"Expended on the poor, as per book, for one year, to Ladyday, 1832, 413*l*."

"There are 77 agricultural labourers. In the summer none are out of employ; in the winter not above five or six are unemployed. These are put on the roads, or, if family men, relieved by the scale as settled at the petty sessions at Sturminster Newton. In short, the scale system and the making up of wages are complete. There is no work-house, but there are eight cottages belonging to the parish, in which there are fourteen families lodged. Soon after the riots of 1830, a new and more liberal scale was made by the magistrates of the division, and in February, 1831, an order was given to the overseers of Hasilbury Bryan, requiring them to relieve ten families, all able-bodied and in employ, by the new scale. The overseers contended, and the clergyman protested, against this order in vain." Now it would be supposed by an indifferent observer, and by a person not locally acquainted with the parish of Hasilbury, from the perusal of the above extract from Mr. Okeden's report, first, that the parish of Hasilbury was reduced, by the maladministration of the justices of this division, to the extremity of poverty and moral degradation, and that the parochial poor-rate was increasing year after year to a most fearful and insupportable amount, threatening to absorb all the visible property of the parish, and to destroy every existing principle of independence, as well as all physical energy on the part of the labouring paupers of this parish. Secondly, that the said justices had interpreted and administered the poor-laws of the realm in a manner both widely and glaringly different from that of any other justices of the county, or even of the kingdom. Before I proceed, however, to the investigation of this part of the subject, I am compelled most reluctantly to protest against the accuracy or veracity of the statement which Mr. Okeden has made, touching the expenditure of the parish of Hasilbury for the year 1832. By referring to the poor-book of this parish (which it is presumed

Mr. Okeden cannot have looked at!) I find that the expenditure of the poor for one year to Ladyday, 1832, is not 413*l*., as stated by Mr. Okeden, but 330*l*. 10*s*., (2*l*. 12*s*. having been disallowed by myself and brother justices in virtue of the 50th Geo. III. c. 49, and deducted from the gross charge made by the overseers of 333*l*. 2*s*. for that year); being just 82*l*. 10*s*. less than the amount quoted by Mr. Okeden, that gentleman having confounded the expenditure of the year 1831 with that of the year succeeding it! But even of this sum, no less than 49*l*. 10*s*. 10*d*. is to be deducted for county rates and mole catching, and which, deducted from 330*l*. for the year 1832, makes the actual expenditure on the poor to be the sum of 280*l*. 19*s*. 2*d*., and this too upon a population of 611!! I would also observe, that by referring to the book for the whole period of three years (during which time only we have presided over the parish of Hasilbury as justices), and not judging, as Mr. Okeden has done, from the gross account of one year only, selecting at the same time the highest amount of expenditure that he could find, including county rates and charges for mole catching, and calling the whole as he has also done "expenditure on the poor." I say, that by referring to the Hasilbury poor-book, and looking at the sums total as sworn to by the overseers during the three years last past, I find that the expenditure in gross on the part of the Hasilbury overseers stands precisely as follows:

1830 and 1831 total expenses of	£.	s.	d.
overseers.....	413	10	2
1831 and 1832 ditto ditto.....	330	10	0
1832 and 1833 ditto ditto.....	305	8	10

showing, that during the last three years (for be it again remembered that Hasilbury Bryan did not belong to the Sturminster Newton division till September, 1830, it having been assigned and added to the Sturminster division by an order of quarter sessions under the sanction of 9. Geo. IV., c. 43, prior to which it formed part and parcel of the Blandford division, and was not under our control at all); showing, I say, that in the last three years, during which period, according to Mr. Okeden's report, we have so grossly and im providently mismanaged its concerns, the poor-rates of Hasilbury have positively decreased from the gross charge of 413*l*. 10*s*. 2*d*. extreme height, down to the sum of 305*l*. 8*s*. 10*d*. present expenditure; being a reduction of poor-rate upon the three years only to the extent of 25 per cent.!!! But I shall beg leave to rate the actual decrease even still higher, by stating that during this period no less than fourteen special rates have been ordered by the court of quarter sessions, and levied for the county lunatic asylum; and that when these and the other extraordinary items are deducted from the several years above recited, it will reduce the total expenditure on the poor in the parish of Hasilbury Bryan for the last three years, to the following proportions:—

Date.	Gross Expenditure.	Extraor. Disbursements.	Expended on Poor.
1830 and 1831	£413 10 2	£49 19 0	£363 11 2
1831 and 1832	330 10 0	49 10 10	280 19 2
1832 and 1833	305 8 10	47 8 5	258 0 5

reducing the expenditure of the year ending Ladyday, 1833, to the sum, the trifling sum of 258*l.* 0*s.* 5*d.*; being, on the whole population of 611 persons, less than the sum per head of 8*s.* 6*d.*, and really less than 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. I would also add, that if the sum of 413*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.* appears to be a sum of considerable magnitude (as contrasted with the charge of the previous years 1829 and 1830) for the expenditure of the year from Ladyday, 1830, to Ladyday, 1831, it ought to be remembered, first, that during and immediately subsequent to "*the riots*," it was deemed advisable by my brother justices and others, to increase the comforts of the poor, and to soothe the lower orders, excited as they were at that eventful period, by a more liberal amount of relief, and, that, during the same year, the large sum of 60*l.* was also paid for the first and only time for *spade husbandry* within this parish, the expenditure of which, and the ordering of which, the magistrates of the division had nothing to do with, and which proved to be, as stated to myself and colleagues, the source of serious loss to the parish, though solely from the mismanagement and negligence of those who superintended it at the time: the introduction of which system, when differently managed, as connected with the plan of allotting small pieces of land to the poor, the magistrates of this division have most warmly advocated: and for the introduction of which plan into the parish of Hasilbury they are ready to tender their best thanks to Mr. Walter.

I beg also to observe, that although the justices did, in the winter of 1830, during "*the riots*"—and the

"*Duris urgens in rebus egestas*" which at that time prevailed, and which, proceeding as it did from inadequacy of wages and insufficiency of relief under the scale, drove the pauper population to madness and to overt acts of rebellion; an able-bodied man having, at this time, only 4*s.* 5*d.* and 6*s.* per week wages, and 2*s.* 1*d.* and 1*s.* 10*d.* per week relief under the scale, to support himself in food and wearing apparel of every sort and kind according to the rate of relief afforded at that period. I say, that although the justices of this division did, at that particular period, order the overseers at Hasilbury to relieve as many as ten families, according to a more liberal and extended system of relief, yet it appears from Mr. Okeden's own statement, that, generally speaking, "in winter not above five or six are unemployed," "and relieved by the scale as settled at the petty sessions at Sturminster Newton:" and that therefore the "magisterial interference" so much com-

plained of, and upon the exercise of which, Mr. Okeden has let down the whole weight of his heavy censure and disapprobation, must have been generally, as we shall presently find it to have been, confined to the grievances and complaints of "five or six only." But I beg to ask, how did it happen that this liberal system of parochial relief was adopted by the justices of this division at this particular period; and why was it that they felt it to be their duty to make the orders of relief on the "ten families" aforesaid, to the great grievance, it seems, of the highly respectable rector and the overseer of Hasilbury Bryan? I proceed to answer these several questions, and to state at the same time, that if Mr. Okeden had informed either myself or brother justices, as he might have done, when he attended at Sturminster, on the 29. of October last, that he had at that very moment received, and then possessed in his green bag a charge against the justices of that division which he intended, upon the *exparte evidence* of certain persons residing at Hasilbury Bryan, to publish to the whole world; I state that if Mr. Okeden, on the day aforesaid, had in candour or justice, saying nothing of common courtesy, afforded to my brother justices and myself, an opportunity of vindicating or explaining our conduct, so far as we could do so, he would have received these several answers on the spot, and we should not have been prejudged and condemned in a public document, before we had been permitted to utter a single syllable in our defence. Be it known then, that under the excitement which prevailed from one end of the west of England to the other, "during the riots of 1830," and when the labouring population was in arms, I have reason to know that several gentlemen in this county made promises to the lower orders of future advantages and greater comforts, and of an increase of wages; assuring them that the same should be raised from 5*s.* and 6*s.* to the height of 10*s.* and 12*s.* per week, and which promise, I grieve to say it, now that the alarm and terror of the moment have subsided, has been broken in a manner the most treacherous and dishonourable;—it was deemed advisable by myself, my brother justices, and others, that the "poor and impotent," and also the able-bodied who were unable to procure employment sufficient for themselves and their helpless families, should also be admitted to a participation of the blessings of that soothing system, which, though late, and extorted from the higher orders of society by fear and terror, it was deemed expedient to adopt at that alarming and distressing period. With this view, and at my earnest request, a special

meeting of the magistrates of the neighbourhood (not of the division of Sturminster Newton, but of the whole neighbourhood), and of the eastern part of the county, was holden at Blandford, in order that they in their wisdom and good feeling might suggest a mode of tranquillizing the county, by applying to the lower orders a liberal and uniform system, both of increased wages and increased relief: my object being, that the labourers of one division should not be made uneasy and discontented by hearing of the greater amount of both prevailing and adopted in another. At this special meeting, Mr. Okeden attended—and at this meeting at Blandford it was that Mr. Okeden broached for the first time, in a formal manner, the doctrine which he has since promulgated and maintained, “that no relief whatever ought to be afforded to the able-bodied man, and that if he and his family could not subsist upon their wages, they might lie down and die by the road side,” (these were the words of Mr. Okeden,) “whether the wages, so received, were or were not per head, sufficient for the support of the able-bodied father and his family.” One justice who was present, and one justice only, assented to this extraordinary and unchristian doctrine, for such I must venture to call it; the result of our deliberation being this: first, that although a uniform system of wages was absolutely impossible, from the fact, that in different parts of the county, from an increased or decreased demand for labour, from a greater or lesser degree of cultivation prevailing, from an excess of arable over pasture land, and from a greater or lesser degree of population, in proportion to the improved and improvable surface of the land so requiring cultivation, a higher amount of wages must exist of necessity, as compared with those parts of the county where the state of society was different; yet that, secondly, in the opinion of the majority of the justices who were present, it was absolutely necessary that the amount of relief to the poor and impotent, and to the able-bodied who were unable to obtain for themselves and families an adequate amount of wages, should be increased from what it had been, and raised to an amount somewhat more upon a level with the common necessities of life. But I go one step further, and I show that the principle of interference with able-bodied labourers, who are unable to support their families from the insufficient wages which they earn, against which system of “magisterial interference,” it appears that the “overseers of Hasilbury contended, and the clergyman protested in vain;” I say that I am prepared to show that this doctrine of “magisterial interference” with an occasional relief to able-bodied men and their families when in distress, received about this identical period, the sanction of the whole court of quarter sessions in this county, and that, too, from one of the fullest and most intelligent benches of magistrates ever assembled at the county hall in solemn deliberation.

On the 18. of February, 1831, at an adjourned sessions, holden at Wimborne, Mr. Okeden gave notice of a motion which he intended to submit to the consideration of the court, about to be assembled at the ensuing quarter sessions, to the following effect, “That it was impolitic and illegal to make up the wages of able-bodied men from the poor-rate;” and accordingly at the Easter sessions, and on the 5. of April, 1831, Mr. Okeden, after recapitulating the arguments which he had previously used at Blandford, at the special meeting of justices above referred to, and after entering into, and reciting these doctrines which he has embodied in the report which forms the subject of these strictures, concluded by pressing upon the court the motion above recited. But what was the result! Were the justices of this county, TO THE AMOUNT OF NEARLY FORTY, were they in favour of the opinion entertained by Mr. Okeden, and since advocated by the overseers of Sturminster, and of Hasilbury Bryan? Were they of opinion that an able-bodied man of unblemished character, with a deserving wife and helpless children, should be allowed to “lie down and die by the road-side,” or drag on a life of wretchedness and want, to which the felons in our county jail cannot be exposed without a violation of the existing law?—No!—Mr. Okeden’s statements or arguments were triumphantly replied to, and Mr. Okeden himself begged permission to withdraw his own motion; thereby from necessity, if not from conviction, acceding to the very doctrine which the magistrates of the whole county maintained in opposition to him, and for acting up to which, Mr. Okeden has seized the present mode, and availed himself of the present opportunity, on exparte and inconclusive evidence, of censuring—not the justices of the whole county of Dorset, who maintained that doctrine after a solemn argument, according to notice given by Mr. Okeden himself, and in opposition to that gentleman—but the justices of the Sturminster Newton division, who simply acted in conformity with the same. I would also ask of Mr. Okeden whether it occurred to him to demand of those, who, on the day aforesaid, dropped into the lion’s mouth at Sturminster Newton, their charges and complaints against the justices of that division, first, whether the orders which were made upon these ten families, were made for a longer period than “one month,” (under the 59th G.3 c. 12);—secondly, whether these orders were renewed; and thirdly, what was the amount of the money expended and paid by the overseers of Hasilbury, in virtue of and under the pressure of those orders, by the amount of which alone, could they have been aggrieved, affirming as I do, that if Mr. Okeden did not ask these questions and record the answers thereto, he was guilty of negligence towards the parish of Hasilbury; and that if he did, and obtained the answers to the same, he ought, in justice to the magistrates of this calumniated division, to have published the result of those

answers, for the purpose of showing the extent of the evil which he and the highly respectable clergyman and overseers of Hasilbury complained of on the one hand, and the amount of money which, according to their views of the case, they had been, in virtue of those orders, unjustly mulcted of on the other. What Mr. Okeden has not done, either in justice to the parish of Hasilbury or to the magistrates of this division, I now beg leave to do in fairness towards both. I state, first, that on the 7. of February, 1831, orders of relief were made, in the usual form, by the justices of this division, on ten persons, *labourers with families*, belonging to Hasilbury Bryan: but these orders were made for the space of "one month only," to meet the exigencies of the then existing crisis, in pursuance of the statute aforesaid, immediately subsequent to the agricultural riots which convulsed this very, and immediate part of the country; and which orders (with one or two exceptions only) were never renewed by us. I would also submit to any one conversant with the duties of magistrates (Mr. Okeden and the highly respectable clergyman and overseers of Hasilbury excepted) whether in their opinion, the period of these "riots" was the time, above all others, to withhold relief from these ten men, and whether, if we had done so, and a tumult had ensued, we should have been considered by my Lord Melbourne, by the lord-lieutenant of this county, and the public at large, as acting up to our duty of conservators of the public peace? But Mr. Okeden has stated that these men were "all ABLE-BODIED," and in "EMPLOY!" In reply to which, I beg to say, that the ten persons on whom we made orders of relief on the 7. of February, 1831, were named as follows, "Jonathan Paddock, John Crocker, Stephen Spicer, Robert Frizzle, Mary Granger, Samuel Muston, John Lush, Robert Caines, Thomas Rolls, and William House," and that by referring to the poor-book of Hasilbury for the year 1831, (and which book it is certain that Mr. Okeden could not have looked at when he made this charge against the justices of this division, although by referring to the instructions which he received as assistant commissioner, I find that "the inspection of parish books, and other vouchers," is a duty most especially recommended to every one who fills that judicial and very responsible office); and looking at the entries of the 6. of February, the day immediately preceding that one, on which the orders of relief, for the time to come, were made on the ten persons and their families,—I find that several sums are entered as paid on that day, in the following manner.

John Crocker	} No Work!
John Lush	
Thomas Rolls	

Proving that the above ten persons were not "all employed" on the day preceding the date of these orders of relief; Mary Grange, a woman with five children, and the three men

above-mentioned being evidently in a different situation; and as to the whole being "able-bodied," it is equally clear that, as many of these persons had children, some of whom (by referring to my notes taken at the time), I find to have been under five years of age, and therefore "impotent and unable to work." "According to the strictest interpretation of the statute of Elizabeth, these children, being objects of relief under these orders, equally with the men, who were their parents, and named in those orders, it is clear that the objects of relief under these orders cannot and ought not to be spoken of and described as being all "able-bodied." I also declare, with a view of supplying the deficiency in the evidence which Mr. Okeden, with the parish book of Hasilbury before him, did not choose, or think it worth while, or any part of his duty to supply, first, that upon the ten persons above-named, upon whom orders of relief were made, on the 7. of February aforesaid, and who with their children amounted to no less than 64 persons, it appears that the two overseers of Hasilbury expended during the single month for which time our orders were binding, the sum of 5*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* and no more; four persons also out of the above having been ill during the said month, (therefore not "able-bodied," as asserted by Mr. Okeden); and which sum, when divided amongst the 64 persons who were included in, and the objects of our order, amounts to about one shilling and nine-pence per head on an average for the time being, and no more! for granting which, and that too, during the time of riot, excitement, and public distress, the justices of this division are censured by Mr. Okeden, "protested against by the clergyman, and contended against by the overseers" of the parish of Hasilbury Bryan. But I beg also to say, on the authority of the printed instructions, page 417, "that it is the duty of the assistant commissioner to endeavour to ascertain the time at which the relief of the able-bodied originated in any parish; whether it is increasing, stationary, or diminishing, or has ceased; and the causes, and results of its origin, increase, continuance, diminution, or termination," &c.; and I therefore ask, whether Mr. Okeden can gain credit from any one for having acted up to these instructions in the case before us. Mr. Okeden must have known "the cause" which induced us to make "the new and more liberal scale" (as he terms it) of the year 1830, because he has indirectly stated it: but Mr. Okeden ought also to have known that having answered its temporary object, that amount of relief and allowance had been reduced: and I beg to ask in the most pointed manner, why this fact is suppressed by Mr. Okeden, and not even glanced at most remotely in his report to Lord Melbourne? If he had admitted us behind the scenes in the private room at Sturminster, or had examined persons who were willing or competent to give fair and impartial information, Mr. Okeden would have found that

whereas in the year 1831, "*soon after the riots*," we deemed the sum of 7s. 4d. for a man and his wife and one child of tender years, to be no more than sufficient, under the peculiar circumstances of the time, bread being at 8d. and 8½d per loaf; yet that in the year 1832, and down to this period also, we deemed and still deem the sum of 5s. 9d. to be sufficient for the same number of persons, bread being at 6d.; and that from the decrease in the price of other articles of consumption, &c., from increased exertions, on the part of landlord and tenant to find employment for paupers, and from the progress of the allotment system, which we have advocated to the utmost of our power; for these and for other reasons, we have universally reduced the amount of relief in all cases, and that so far from any ill effect being produced by this reduction, I find, not only that the labouring poor throughout the division (with the exception of the town and parish of Sturminster Newton) are perfectly contented, *but that even in the parish of Hasilbury, there is not on this very day a single able-bodied pauper out of employ*, and that the first month's payment for the year, on the part of the newly-appointed overseers, amounts to the trifling sum of 5l. 14s. for a population of 611 persons. Why Mr. Okeden, therefore, on the 25. December, 1832, did not endeavour to learn the amount of the expenditure for the three quarters of the parochial year then expired; why he did not fairly and candidly state the amount of the yearly decrease of that expenditure under our system of "magisterial interference;" and why Mr. Okeden did not assign the existing cause of the "new and more liberal scale" during the period of the riots; and why he did not fairly state the true and exact amount of its pressure on the parish of Hasilbury, especially the amount of that pressure produced by the orders of relief on the "ten able-bodied persons" (assuming them to have been such); and why he did not candidly state at the same time the cause and duration of these extraordinary orders for relief, and the effect produced by our system on the existing character of its inhabitants, (none of whom, and as I believe, in consequence of our protection and interference in extreme cases, have been committed for any crime, one man excepted, for stealing an hurdle from Mr. Walter,) as well as the gradual abandonment on our part, of this obnoxious part of our practice; and lastly, the gradual and complete employment of the whole labouring population of Hasilbury Bryan these are questions which I feel it to be my duty to ask, leaving Mr. Okeden to assign, if he can, a reasonable cause for his overlooking them as he has done. But I beg also to state that not only by the magistrates of this county, I may say by the magistrates of this whole kingdom, is the doctrine of "magisterial interference," in favour of able-bodied labourers in extreme cases of distress, and when adequate wages *can not be obtained for the support of themselves and their families*, both adopted and acted upon gen-

rally, I ask permission to show that by the legislature itself, and by the Court of King's Bench, when appealed to on this principle, it is the same doctrine of "magisterial interference," in behalf of the poor inhabitants of every parish, either *indirectly encouraged or positively sanctioned*. It cannot be denied that the legislature of this kingdom, through the medium of its peers and commoners, who are magistrates of the realm, is acquainted with the manner in which the poor-laws have been diverted from their original purpose, and is cognizant of the shifts and expedients to which the justices of England have been reduced, in order to make the antiquated and imperfect statutes of an earlier and very ancient period accommodate themselves to the existence and pressure of circumstances, of a modern and unlooked-for growth; and which the framers of the statute of Elizabeth, and the framers of the subsequent statutes down to the 3. William and Mary, chap. 11, and the 9. Geo. 1, chap. 7.; did not and could not have contemplated. It is admitted by all who have spoken or written on this subject, that the present *departure* (for a departure there has been) from the original spirit and strict letter of the poor-laws *took place only about the period of the late war*. It is an evil, therefore, of modern growth: and it is an evil to which the attention of Parliament has been continually directed: and yet, although Whig and Tory Ministers have alternately presided over the helm of government, and although the members of both Houses of Parliament, *being acting justices themselves, and therefore aiding and abetting the very system complained of*—must have been acquainted with the existence of this practice, no one single statute has been passed with a view of putting down this evil, of *putting an end to the practice of relieving, under certain circumstances, able-bodied paupers unable to find employment at adequate wages, or of declaring it illegal*! On the contrary I maintain and affirm that both the legislature of this country, and the Court of King's Bench, as evinced in the memorable case of the King versus Collet, where the question touching the legality of granting relief to able-bodied paupers *was evidently evaded by that court*; and what is more, the acquiescence of persons themselves, who feel themselves aggrieved, by refusing as they have done, (and as the overseers of Hasilbury did, on the 7. February, 1831,—though most distinctly told by myself and brother justices, that we were ready to meet them in that court, in order to have the question settled both at once and for ever,) to enter the Court of King's Bench, with a view of bringing the legal consideration of this question before the final adjudication of the judges of the land; I affirm that all collectively have conspired to give a colour and a credit to the propriety of this practice, and have clothed the exercise of it with all the sanctity of long usage. It is perfectly true, that the Parliamentary committee on the poor-laws, just previous to the dissolution of the late Parliament,

resolved, that it was expedient, that the opinion of the judges should be taken on the following questions :

1. Does the 43. of Elizabeth, chap. 2, or any other law, authorise magistrates to order any relief to be given to poor persons who are able to work, or to afford them any assistance, except by procuring some employment for them where employment can be obtained ?

2. If it be satisfactorily proved that employment cannot be procured within a reasonable distance of the parish to which able-bodied poor belong, will the magistrates in such case be authorised to order relief ?

3. Where able-bodied poor persons can maintain only a part of their family by the wages of their labour, are magistrates authorised to order any relief to be given to them for the maintenance of such of their children, not being able to work, as they cannot maintain ? And which the abrupt prorogation and subsequent dissolution of that Parliament alone prevented from being carried into effect. The very fact, however, of doubts being entertained upon this subject, by a parliamentary committee, sitting upon the question of the poor-laws, and the very fact of this branch of the legislature requiring the aid and advice of the judges of the law, in order to enable them to prove whether the granting relief to able-bodied men, under extreme circumstances of distress and non-employment, was legal or illegal, shows of itself, first, that the statute law on this subject is not as clear, at all events touching the "illegality" of the practice, as Mr. Okeden endeavoured to prevail upon the court of quarter sessions of this county to think was the case, on the 5. of April, 1830 : and that, therefore, till these doubts are cleared up, and till the opinion of the judges is delivered, these statutes ought to be interpreted in favour of the subject, and in favour of the poor, for whose advantage they were passed. As long, however, as the 36. G. 3, c. 23, and the 55. G. 3, c. 137, are in existence, declaring it to be "lawful for any justice or justices of the peace to direct and order collection and relief to be paid to any industrious poor person or persons at his, her, or their home or homes, house or houses, under certain circumstances of temporary illness;" and as long as the 59. G. 3, c. 12 and 15, which statute enables two justices, under certain circumstances, on complaint of the want of adequate relief by or on the behalf of any "poor inhabitant," (not of the "lame, impotent, old, blind, and such other among them being poor and not able to work," as recited in and limited by the statute of 43. Eliz. chap. 2.) but generally, on the behalf of any "poor inhabitant,"—I say, that as long as justices are empowered by this statute, as well "to make an order under their hands and seals for such relief as they in their just and proper discretion shall think necessary, reference being had by such justices to the character and conduct of the applicant," so long shall I for one consider that there has been a virtual

departure from the letter and spirit of the 43. Elizabeth, chap. 2.; and so long shall I consider that the statutes have been enlarged, with a view of meeting the exigencies of the present time, and the difficulties and distresses of the "poor inhabitants" of every parish within the counties of England.—I now proceed to address myself to the consideration of Mr. Okeden's concluding observations upon the parish of Hasilbury Bryan, and which stand thus in his report : "Mr. Walter determined, in the year 1823, to put an end to the illegal system of roundsmen, or stemmen, and he appealed to the Dorsetshire July quarter sessions against the rate made for that purpose." "I fear Mr. Walter's appeal in 1823, did not conciliate THE MAGISTRATES; and certain it is, that in some remarkable cases the Bench of the division have done all in their power to counteract Mr. Walter's efforts." Now I ask in the first place, who are "THE MAGISTRATES" who are, by implication, accused by Mr. Okeden of being actuated by a spirit of vindictive feeling towards the highly respectable rector of this parish ? In the year 1823, the parish of Hasilbury was part and parcel of the division of Blandford, and it was therefore against the adjudication and allowance of the rate sanctioned by the honourable magistrates of the Blandford division, and not against any judicial acts of the justices of the Sturminster division, that Mr. Walter's appeal was made. To the honourable and most highly respected justices of the Blandford division, then, as to the persons who are made the objects of this uncharitable insinuation of Mr. Okeden's, I leave the task of replying to this most odious charge. I content myself with declaring that, in the year 1823, three out of the seven magistrates who now act for the Sturminster division, were not at that time in the commission of the peace;—at all events, that they did not at that period act as justices of this division; and that therefore they, presuming for a moment that they could be vile enough to be influenced by any personal feelings of any kind, in the discharge of their judicial functions, could not have been influenced by possibility in any matter or thing where Mr. Walter has been concerned. Nor do I believe that "the Bench" ever came in contact with or had any opportunity of "thwarting" the rector of Hasilbury Bryan, except when, on two occasions, he attended the petty sessions for the purpose of promulgating doctrines of non-interference in cases of parochial relief, which the justices of the division did not deem it expedient to accede to—thinking that the control of the overseers, and the power of granting relief to paupers out of employ, ought not to be surrendered by them to any one, however respectable he might be in his individual capacity. As Mr. Okeden, however, has stated that "IN SOME REMARKABLE CASES," the bench of the division have done all in their power to counteract Mr. Walter's efforts, I here beg leave, not merely in my own name, but in the name of

the whole Bench, to demand from Mr. Okeden a distinct enumeration and explanation of these "REMARKABLE CASES," requiring at the same time the name of the individual on whose statements he has thus presumed to impugn our magisterial conduct. But what will be thought of the levity of manner, and the insufficiency of evidence, on which Mr. Okeden has presumed to attempt to affix a stigma on "the bench" at Sturminster, and on the purity of motives and conduct, which, I boldly affirm, have always characterized the judicial acts of the four remaining justices whose conduct in this matter remains to be accounted for; what will be thought of this attempt on the part of Mr. Okeden to impute to them something like vindictive feelings towards the Rev. Henry Walter, because that highly respectable gentleman, "in the year 1823, appealed to the Dorsetshire July quarter sessions against the rate made for the purpose" of paying these roundsmen and stem-men (even granted that this rate had been ministerially allowed by us, which did not happen to be the case). When I declare, as I do from authority, that so far from opposing Mr. Walter on that occasion, I, for one, and my honourable colleague, the Rev. John Bastard, for another, actually voted in favour of the principle contended for, and the appeal which was entered and prosecuted by Mr. Walter; and that of the remaining two most honourable men, who, with Mr. Bastard and myself at that time constituted "the bench" at Sturminster Newton, one was absent from the sessions; and that, with respect to the other, from the lapse of time which has taken place, it is difficult to ascertain whether he was present, or how he voted upon that occasion. But when I state that the name of that one colleague, of whose presence and vote these doubts are entertained; when I state that his name is HENRY SEYMOUR, Esq. of HANFORD HOUSE, I state enough to show that upon the name of an individual so truly good, so honourable, so upright, and exemplary as he is, it is out of the power of any man on earth to affix the shadow of an insinuation as to the purity of his principles, or the correctness of his conduct as a gentleman and as a magistrate. I will only add, that this unkind insinuation of Mr. Okeden's is the more extraordinary and unexpected, when it is considered that Mr. Okeden himself was continually in attendance upon that very court of quarter sessions, which, at the Easter sessions of 1830, placed the parish of Hasilbury under our jurisdiction for the first time from and after the 1. of September then ensuing; just seven years after the appeal of Mr. Walter in 1823. I now pause a moment, at this stage of my inquiry, for the purpose of asking whether Mr. Okeden's report, with the suppression of these facts previously recited by me, and with charges and insinuations on his part, against the justices of this division, every one of which I have proved to have been insufficiently alleged. I ask whether this report as far as the division over which we are presiding is concerned, can be

considered, as "a diligent and full inquiry into the practical operation of the laws for the relief of the poor," and an impartial, fair, open, and candid statement of facts, whereon his employers, the poor-law commissioners of England, can form correct opinions, touching the effects produced by those laws. I have proved already that Mr. Okeden has not correctly stated even the amount of the poor-rate expended by the overseers of Hasilbury: and that he has mistaken and assigned the expenditure of one year for another. I have proved that Mr. Okeden has quoted the gross sum standing at the foot of the account, for the year 1831, stating that sum to have been "expended on the poor" in that particular year, without deducting the extraordinary sums levied upon and paid out of the poor-rate, amounting to 48*l.* 19*s.*, and without allowing for the sum of 16*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.* in hand, and therefore levied in, and belonging to a previous year,—making therefore, in his statement of expenditure for this one year, a mistake of no less than sixty-six pounds, sixteen shillings, and four-pence, upon the sum of 413*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.*! I have also proved that Mr. Okeden has quoted the highest amount of expenditure, perhaps, ever known in the parish of Hasilbury, brought about too, as that excessive increase of poor-rate was, by the operation of external and internal causes, with which we, as justices of the division had nothing to do—and for which, therefore, we ought not to have been blamed; and which circumstances, common diligence in the execution of his duty, as a commissioner paid out of the public purse, and common candour and justice towards the aforesaid magistrate, ought to have induced him to explain and notice, with the view, if no other motives intervened, of placing the population and expenditure of this parish in a true and just position relatively to each other. I have also proved, that within the three last years, in which the parish of Hasilbury has been under our magisterial control, there has been a yearly decrease of annual expenditure on the poor, amounting to 25 per cent. on the average of those years; and which, though eloquently explicit, when speaking of the parish of Cranbourne, touching the yearly decrease of parish rates brought about by the system of non-interference adopted by himself, Mr. Okeden has studiously omitted, and has not had the fairness or kindness to notice, when taking place in the division of those justices to whose administration of the poor-laws he chooses to be opposed. I have also proved that the insinuation which Mr. Okeden has uncharitably, and I must also say very illiberally made, touching the improper or apparently vindictive motives, which have influenced our decisions, so far as the highly respectable rector and the overseers of Hasilbury are concerned, are not only groundless and untrue, but that they are attributable, if attributable to any one, to the justices of a neighbouring division,—to the justices of Blandford, and to them alone, whose

allowance of the rate was appealed against, by Mr. Walter; and which justices, for a period of seven years after the determination of that question, alone interfered in, and controlled the affairs of the parish of Hasilbury!! Having proved thus much, and leaving the consideration of these facts to the candour and justice of the public, I now proceed to the further consideration of the final part of Mr. Okeden's report—so far as we, the said justices of the Sturminster division, are collectively affected by it.

STURMINSTER NEWTON PARISH.

Having thus disposed of the parish of Hasilbury Bryan, Mr. Okeden proceeds to make a sweeping and very comprehensive survey of the "*district of Sturminster Newton*;" meaning, I presume, the state and condition of the *division generally*; and which survey and summary is made in the following very remarkable sentence:—"I have already named in my report on Dorsetshire, the district of Sturminster Newton, as the **WORST REGULATED AS TO POOR CONCERNS, with the highest proportionate rates in the county**; it is certain that in no district is there so much "*magisterial interference*." Now the fair and only inference to be drawn from these words, is simply this; that the ill-regulation as to poor concerns, which pervades the whole division, is attributable to "*magisterial in-*

terference: and that the proportion of poor-rate in this division is higher than it is in any other division of the whole county; and that such higher proportion is principally, if not solely, attributable to the interference also, of us, the justices aforesaid! But I not only deny absolutely and positively this statement of Mr. Okeden, but I proceed to show by facts which cannot be contradicted, *beginning with the parish of Sturminster Newton, and tracing the effects of our system throughout the twenty parishes which constitute this division*, that Mr. Okeden has again accused and misrepresented us in a most unwarrantable manner.

First, then, to commence with the town and parish of Sturminster Newton; I beg to state that the return made to the justices of this division, on oath, in pursuance of the 55. Geo. III., chap. 51, both as to the extent and this parish is as follows:

	ACRES, 3,837.	£.	s.	d.
Annual value		5,755	10	0
Average amount of tithes		1,000	0	0
Stock in trade		88	1	8

Total annual value £6,843 11 8

and that the population of the whole parish, according to the returns of the year 1831, amounts to 1,831 persons. The poor-rate from 1830 down to Ladyday, 1833, stands the value of precisely as follows:—

Year.	Gross Expenditure.	Extra Disbursements.	Net Expenditure on the Poor.	Increase.
1831 and 1832	£2161 14 11	£141 19 0	£2019 15 11	£415 14 3
1832 and 1833	2365 18 8½	111 10 3	2254 8 5½	650 6 9½

and the question is, whether, as assumed and stated by Mr. Okeden, this increase of poor-rate, in the parish of Sturminster, is attributable, either solely or principally, to "*magisterial interference*" or to other causes, distinct and reasonable, and beyond the control of those magistrates; and which causes of increase, duly considered, would lead to conclusions more just than those which Mr. Okeden has formed, so far as the conduct of the justices of this division is concerned on the one hand, and more correct, with a view of conveying to his Majesty's poor-law commissioners proper information touching the working of these laws upon the other. In order to arrive at this desirable end, I beg to state in the first place, that if the "*scale*," so prominently alluded to by Mr. Okeden, had been, or could have been, the cause of the increase of these poor-rates, in the town of Sturminster, that increase would have taken place long before the period of 1832, in which year the first increase of any consequence, viz., an increase of 415l. 14s. 3d. over the amount of the previous year, took place upon the net expenditure of poor-rate; that "*scale*" having been in operation for nearly, if not more than twenty years, without intermission; and which

increase, if Mr. Okeden had examined the "*parish books*," according to his instructions, (which I am informed by the overseers of Sturminster he declined or neglected to do,) he would have found not to have taken place, passing over a long series of years, till the aforesaid year of 1832. Before I proceed to inquire into the causes of this increase, I will state, once for all, that "*THE SCALE*" which has been acted upon in this division for so long a period of time, was brought into practice from a neighbouring division (Wincanton, in the county of Somerset) a great number of years ago, the Wincanton division being in the northern direction of the county, closely adjoining to our own: it having been, I presume, the object of the judges who so introduced it, to assimilate as much as they could well do, the rate of relief in this neighbourhood generally; and as a great deal has been said about the nature and effects produced by this "*SCALE*," I here beg leave to present the public with a copy of the same as originally introduced, leaving them to calculate whether any human being can exist upon a sum less than that which the said "*scale*," when in use, allowed for their support; and whether, in fact, they can honestly exist upon it at all.

SCALE IN THE WINCANTON DIVISION.

For regulating the Allowance of Parochial Relief to the Poor, according to the price of bread, where there are two or more messing together in one family.

When the Standard Wheat Quarter Loaf is sold at...	The weekly allowance to be made up, including earnings for a Labouring Man.....	For a Woman, or Boy, or Girl, above 14 years old	For a Child under 14
20	s. d. 5 1	3 8	3 3
19	s. d. 4 10	3 6	3 1
18	s. d. 4 7	3 4	2 11
17	s. d. 4 4	3 2	2 9
16	s. d. 4 1	2 10	2 7
15	s. d. 3 10	2 8	2 5
14	s. d. 3 7	2 6	2 3
13	s. d. 3 4	2 4	2 1
12	s. d. 3 1	2 2	1 11
11	s. d. 2 10	2 0	1 9
10	s. d. 2 7	1 10	1 7
9	s. d. 2 4	1 8	1 5
8	s. d. 2 1	1 6	1 3
7	s. d. 1 10	1 4	1 1

The earnings of a woman having three children under twelve years of age not to be taken into account.

In parishes where fuel is not supplied to the poor on moderate terms, the magistrates will make an additional allowance to the pauper.

Mr. Okeden, however, has stated, taking the particular parish of Hasilbury as a model, that the wages which are earned by a man, his wife, and three children, amount to 41l. 5s. per annum; and he has apparently made

this remark, with a view of showing that the justices of this division are not warranted under such circumstances, in making any grant to a family at all, *where wages so great can be received almost by asking for them.* But I beg to inform Mr. Okeden that he is in error, if he conceives, or being told as much, believes, that generally speaking, a labouring man with a wife and three children can earn anything like the wages here stated by him. I affirm, first, that in many parishes *no work can be got by a labouring man at all at certain seasons of the year*: secondly, if work can be got at seven shillings per week, that in *wet days and bad weather* they are allowed nothing by their employer, and are sent home, to my certain knowledge, without a farthing; in proof of which, I state as a fact, that in the parish of Sturminster Newton, during the hay harvest, and during last summer time, *no less than forty persons* were dismissed and sent home on one single morning, in consequence of a storm of rain rendering the hay unfit to be carried,—and that in the *winter months, in hard frosts and deep snow*, when labourers cannot work, if work could be provided for them, similar deductions must be made from this general assumed amount of 13s. 6d. per week; and yet Mr. Okeden, without sufficient inquiry into these facts, or the practice of the division, has eagerly caught at this gross amount of wages, and rated the same at 41l. 5s. per annum; *as if no abatement whatever was to be made, or ever was made, from the same!!* But I go further—I deny that a woman who has a husband and three children to wash and mend, and provide food for, *can earn the sum of 2s. 6d. per week by button-making*: and I really believe that the poor man's income is rated from 7l. to 10l. per annum higher than it really is, taking one year with another. But I also declare that if, as assumed by Mr. Okeden, there could be earned and annually enjoyed by an able-bodied man, with a wife and three children, the sum of 13s. 6d. per week, or 41l. 5s. per annum, as stated by him, *in no case whatever should we, as justices of this division, order or allow them a single farthing by way of relief—our rate of allowance to the same number of persons, including house rent, being only 10s. per week, which is 3s. 6d. per week less than the above sum stated by Mr. Okeden!* The aforesaid scale, however, was, as before stated, put an end to and destroyed *"immediately after the riots," in the year 1832*; and a more liberal rate of allowance was adopted for the time being; varying according to circumstances,—departed from where necessary,—and abridged or extended, or withheld entirely, (as I shall presently show, in contradiction to Mr. Okeden,) *where the character of the party was undeserving.* But I repeat, that if the scale had been the cause,—and if "magisterial interference" had been the cause also, of the sudden increase of the poor-rates in Sturminster, it is remarkable indeed that such increase *did not take place during the twenty years that*

the scale had been at work, prior to 1832;—and during which time, to my own certain knowledge, the same amount of “magisterial interference” had been used without producing such increase. What then are the causes of this increase—and of the moral wretchedness and “ill-regulation” of the parish of Sturminster Newton, which, as a consequence, have succeeded? I state first, that there has been, within the last ten years, an increase of population within the town of Sturminster, amounting to TWO HUNDRED AND NINETEEN PERSONS; and which number,—thrown upon a town already over-populated, without any, even the slightest increase of profitable labour, must have produced, as they have produced, an increase both of poverty and expense. Now I will assume that one-third only of these persons, (increased by this time to full 260 persons,) have been thrown upon the parish, which will amount to seventy-three persons; and which persons, at the common and ordinary rate of relief, or consumption, (call it what you will,) at 1s. 6d. per head, will thus cost the parish the sum of 277l. 8s. per annum: and which sum I produce as the first item by way of a set-off to, and as a means of accounting for, this sudden increase of 415l. 14s. 3d., merely adding that the extreme pressure of these children could not have been felt at once, or be reasonably expected to take place, till they had arrived at the period of 10 or 12 years of age. But I beg leave to say, that there has been also, a sudden decrease of expenditure of capital as well, within the town and parish of Sturminster, within the precise period of the two last years;—the very years in which this sudden increase has taken place in the poor-rates; which, of itself, connected with one more cause about to be assigned, and leaving the increase of population, with a decrease of profitable labour totally out of the question, would be sufficient to account for this sudden increase of poor-rate to the extent aforesaid. I state it as a fact, which Mr. Okeden might have learnt by common inquiry, that from 1825 to 1830, two benevolent and most excellent individuals residing within the parish continued to employ no less than 27 or 28 men belonging to the parish, at the rate of 10s. per week; and that their expenditure for that period, taken at the extreme amount, could not have been less than THREE HUNDRED PER ANNUM: and which sum, in the year 1830, was diverted into another channel, and withdrawn entirely from this particular object. Here, then, is the additional sum of 300l. per annum, to be made up by the overseers of this parish; for out of their department only can the deficit be made up, making up the sum of 577l. 8s. annual loss to the parish, and additional increase of the Sturminster poor-rate, without the slightest particle of “magisterial interference” on the part of the justices of this division; and when to this is added the fact, that from the depression and distress which have fallen upon the shopkeepers and farmers, there has been

a manifest and lamentable decrease of employment and demand for labour, (and which will be conceived to be the case when I state that if the whole labouring population of the parish were employed and apportioned, it would require only one man to every seventy acres of land!); and that from one cause and another the surplus of able-bodied men have not been engaged by the merchants in the Newfoundland trade as they used to be formerly, the average per annum, who were sent out from Sturminster, till within these ten years, being six, and the same number engaged and sent out since that period, being only two, and occasionally three persons; thereby throwing the weight and pressure of thirty or forty men at the least upon the parish, on the average of ten years, together with the chance, I might also say the certainty of their contracting marriages, and burdening the parish with a family in the mean time: I say that when from these causes combined, we find that the non-employment of the labouring poor has arrived to the present pitch, we shall feel ourselves enabled on the one hand to account for the increase of poor-rate which has taken place at this particular crisis, without tracing it to “magisterial interference,” with which I now proceed to show that it has had nothing to do;—and to feel ourselves justified in expressing our astonishment on the other, that none of those causes should have been noticed by Mr. Okeden in that part of his report which has been “published by authority!” But there are other causes which will account for the aforesaid increase of the Sturminster poor-rate, and which in one sense will justify the declaration of Mr. Okeden that the parish of Sturminster has been an “ill-regulated parish.” About twelve months ago the late overseers, without consulting the justices, placed the able-bodied single men of the parish who were out of employ, on the following most insufficient allowance: *they told them that they should work at the gravel-pits till they could earn 3s. per week; and that from and after that period they might go where they pleased, for that they should neither be employed or paid by the overseer of that parish any longer!* This system, as might be supposed, it being A PENALTY ON CELIBACY AND A PREMIUM ON CRIME; led as it will continue to lead, to consequences the most fatal to the future prosperity of Sturminster. But I ask, even under these extreme and most lamentable circumstances of “ill-regulation” and improvidence, —not on the part of the justices, but of the overseers of the town of Sturminster, where was the “magisterial interference” so much complained of by Mr. Okeden? How many summonses were granted by them, at the suit of the unmarried, oppressed, and ill-paid paupers of the parish of Sturminster;—how many orders of relief were made by the busy and “interfering magistrates” of this mismanaged division? None! No one single summons was issued—no one single order of maintenance was made—and these cases, as

at Cranbourne, were allowed to "*rest on their own merits*," it having been the practice, and it being now the practice of myself and brother justices, *never to interfere if we consider that the party complaining has enough for a bare subsistence!!* But I state, as an additional fact, by way of showing the increase of the poor's expenditure in this parish, that the *very trifling sum* thus afforded to these single men, amounted to 150*l.* per annum. I beg also to state, as a proof of our forbearance and non-interference with parochial management, that, upon the 22. of this present month, thirty-nine of the *able-bodied paupers of this parish, came to my house in a body*, complaining of ill-usage on the part of the then newly-appointed overseers, and asking for my advice and assistance on the occasion. My first step was, to order every one of these men to return to their parish, leaving as representatives of each class of complainants too married and two single men to detail and to explain to me their grievances: and although, upon examining these four men I found, that without due notice, the new overseers had reduced the single men to the allowance of 2*s* 6*d.* per week, instead of 3*s.* as previously allowed, requiring them to work, as they now work, *twelve hours per day for the whole week, for this miserable pittance*, yet so far from exercising any "*magisterial interference*" in the matter, I issued no summons—I made them no promise—merely saying that the justices of the division would hold a conference with the parish, taking at the same time the precaution of driving into the town, and telling the whole number of fifty men, *who had all struck work, and were assembled at the Crown Inn, that by taking the law into their own hands, and by combining as they had done for an unlawful purpose*, viz. that of intimidating the overseers, and by *leaving their work*, which all of them had done on that day, they had forfeited our protection on those accounts, inasmuch as we had and ever should make in our decisions **DISTINCTIONS AS TO CHARACTER**, and I can state that up to this time—twenty-five days after the event above alluded to, no steps whatever have been taken either by myself or brother justices to coerce the overseers: although my own opinion most decidedly is—now that the men are again quietly at work, that the sum of 2*s* 6*d.* to single men, should be increased to the sum of 3*s.* from which it was abridged, and the rather, as they are now compelled to work six days instead of two, as heretofore, and that too at twelve hours per day for this wretchedly insufficient sum, and because no single man, without the advantage derived from numbers in a family, can subsist honestly for less than 3*s.* per week. It will be expected also, whilst I am enumerating the causes which have led to this increase, that I should state the average number of men, able-bodied men which have been out of employ in the parish of Sturminster within the two years last past, and which I do, by stating, that *no less than forty men with their families are in*

the aforesaid most deplorable condition; and I then leave any one to wonder, if they can, at the increase and amount of the Sturminster parochial poor-rate expenditure, coupled as that non-employment has been with other causes, and connected as these causes have also been by the levying of fourteen special and extraordinary county rates, within this period, or nearly so, for the erection and completion of the Lunatic County Asylum, at Foreton, and which causes, collectively taken, will surely be more than sufficient to account for the increased expenditure of the year ending Ladyday, 1833, over that of 1830 and 1831; amounting in the gross to 650*l.* 6*s.* 9*d.* increase upon a population of 1,831 persons, *under the peculiar and distressing circumstances above alluded to.*

I now proceed to notice the sole remaining charge of Mr. Okeden against the justices of this division, contained as that most serious accusation against us is in the following words of his report: "**IN THIS DISTRICT INDEED** "the overseers know so well the inability of "resistance, that to avoid trouble, expense, "and reproof, *they generally accede to the "demands, and settle all claims, NOT BY "CHARACTER OR MERIT, but by the rules of addition and subtraction.*" In replying to this charge, I do not content myself with making, as Mr. Okeden has unfortunately done more than once, *an allegation without evidence to support it, but I deny the charge both in the name of the overseers of the division, and in the name of the justices of this division as well*; and I proceed to show, by recent proofs, that our practice is quite contrary to that which is thus imputed to us by Mr. Okeden. I must state in the first place, that with the exception of Hasilbury Bryan, and Sturminster generally, and of Stalbridge and Iwerne Courtenay parishes very rarely and occasionally, (four parishes out of the number of twenty, as contained in our whole division,) we scarcely ever hear or see, or come in contact with the overseers of any one single parish, except in cases of removal, cases of bastardy, or when their accounts are made up and presented for allowance at the end of the parochial year. This is a fact which I state on authority which cannot be questioned, and therefore I affirm that if the overseers of these twenty parishes "*accede to the demands and settle the claims*" of the paupers who apply to them, "*not by character "or merit, but by the rules of addition and "subtraction,*" I affirm that it is a practice which we have not sanctioned,—that it is one which we are ignorant of,—and what is more, that it is one which *we do not believe to exist.* As a proof, however, that when the overseers choose to take the trouble to lay complaints against the "*characters*" of paupers (which we are continually and incessantly obliged to do, and which they will not take the trouble to do, as we can prove, if necessary, on oath, both by our clerk and the admission of overseers of the several parishes as well), as a proof that

we have recourse to those powers of discrimination which as men and individuals we ought to exercise, and which as magistrates, in accordance with the spirit of 59. Geo. III. chap. 12, we are bounden to carry into effect in all cases that come before us; as a proof that "character and merit" do form the basis of our decisions, I most positively declare that in several instances which have lately come before us, even from the parish of Hasilbury, and also from the towns of Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton, and other parishes as well, we have *refused relief* to a certain number of applicants on account of their indifferent characters; and I also state that in the only four cases which have come before us with the past year, from the populous town of Stalbridge, we have, on the complaint of the overseers, committed one, and reprimanded three others, the overseers stating that the above example would answer the ends of justice, and the object they had in view.

Offence.	Committed.	Fined.	Bound over, &c.
For assaults.....	2	1	0
For drunkenness	0	1	0
Idle, and not working	4	0	0
Breaches of the Peace	1	0	2
Violations of the Lord's Day	0	8	0

Total punished by the justices of this division from *Sturminster only*—nineteen persons.

In my own parish, the parish of Stock Gaylard, I can also affirm that the only man who has applied for relief for the period of upwards of ten years, was *refused relief by the justices of this division on the plea of bad character* under the following circumstances. I have employed, for a series of years, nearly every man in the parish, able-bodied or otherwise, capable of doing work, and the pauper above alluded to amongst them. I had apprenticed his son, and placed out his two daughters at service, and had given him some fir poles to build up a shed with: not contented however with taking the trees which had been given him he cut sixteen others standing in one of my plantations, and for this act of dishonesty he was dismissed by myself, and *refused, most properly, any parochial relief by the justices of the division: but which act of dishonesty, after a penance of one twelve months on the part of the offender, I have pardoned and overlooked: the man being restored to his usual work, and to a state of comparative affluence and comfort: but showing, in conjunction with the above cases, that a deficiency of "Character or Merit" meets with no countenance or encouragement from the justices of this division.* Whilst upon this subject, I will also add, speaking of my own parish, that I have *apportioned a moderate rent, from half-an-acre to three quarters of an acre of land to every labourer of this parish, and to a certain number of the adjoining parish of Lydlinch as well, in which a portion of my*

In the town and parish of Sturminster also, where, from the state of *mismanagement on the part of the late overseers*, a fearful amount of crime is now taking place, and will continue to take place, if, as I hope will be the case, a better system of pauper management is not speedily introduced (*the allotment system being now about to be tried, and the labour rate being about to be had recourse to at Michaelmas next, both of which, in the opinion of the assistant overseer, will reduce the poor-rate one-fourth for the time to come*). As a proof that we have not been idle and remiss in our duty in this parish, I state as a fact, that we have not only *refused relief to undeserving characters*, but that we have done the utmost in our power to suppress every sort of crime, and that even *within the year now last past* we have dealt with the criminal, and idle, and disorderly, of the parish of Sturminster, as follows: and this too in many of the cases at the suit of the overseer:

property is situated; that every man has from one to two or more pigs; no one, with the exception aforesaid, having been before the bench either for relief, or for any act of dishonesty for the period of more than ten years, (I might perhaps say for double that period,) and that our poor-rate does not exceed the trifling sum of 1s. 4d. in the pound; and I have no doubt, that if Mr. Okeden had inquired generally throughout the parishes which surround it, as to the state and condition of the poor, and the effects of the present system of magisterial control—if he had made a fair and general inquiry throughout the whole division, "dwelling, (to quote again his "Instructions from the Central Board" from which he has so lamentably departed,) dwelling principally on those facts from which some general inference may be drawn, AND WHICH FORM THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION,"—I have no doubt whatever, but that similar results would have been arrived at, tending to show the well-being of those parishes generally the good character of their inhabitants, and the discreet and cautious mode of conduct of the magistracy of the division under whose control they are placed. Instead of so doing, instead of adducing facts and arguments, "modern instances," and proofs in confirmation of his bold assertion, "THAT THE DISTRICT OF STURMINSTER NEWTON IS THE WORST REGULATED AS TO POOR CONCERNS, with the highest proportionate rates in the county;" instead of conforming himself to the rules and directions of the poor-law commissioners, who tell him to dwell principally "on those facts from which

"some GENERAL INFERENCE may be drawn, and which FORM THE RULE rather than THE EXCEPTION," Mr. Okeden has chosen to invert this generous maxim, and has fastened with avidity upon the single parish of Hasilbury, WHICH FORMS THE EXCEPTION instead of the rule, even according to Mr Okeden's own statements, taking them as they stand; and then those illogically and unjustly arguing from particulars to universals, has ventured and endeavoured from a solitary instance of presumed parochial irregularity and mismanagement, (admitting it for mere argument to have been so,) to infer and to charge the justices of the division with a SYSTEM OF BAD MANAGEMENT, AND IRREGULARITY OF PRACTICE THROUGHOUT THEIR WHOLE DIVISION OR DISTRICT. But I ask, where are the proofs of this assumption and declaration on the part of Mr. Okeden? Where are the proofs on his part that our division is visited and afflicted "with the highest proportionate rates in the county?" Why has not Mr. Okeden produced a schedule of the whole division, with the poor's rate expenditure, and population and poundage of every parish, compared and contrasted with schedules from other divisions, "from whence some general inference might be drawn," and where the "general rule" of our practice, compared with the practice of other divisions, might be seen and fairly appreciated? Why has not Mr. Okeden done this instead of selecting, as he has done, one single parish only, seemingly with a view of illustrating his own peculiar opinions (which have been repudiated by the justices of the whole county in quarter sessions assembled) and seemingly for the purpose of imputing to the justices of this division, motives of conduct and feelings of resentment and unkindness towards the rector of Hasilbury, which they shrink from with abhorrence? What Mr. Okeden has not done, I here beg leave to do for him: I present an Analysis of THE POOR LAW EXPENDITURE, THE POPULATION, AND THE AMOUNT OF POOR-RATE IN THE POUND, OF EVERY PARISH IN THE STURMINSTER DIVISION: I do so in justice to his Majesty's Poor-Law Commissioners, who have, as it would appear, been sadly misinformed by Mr. Okeden upon this subject; I do so in justice as well to the magistrates of this calumniated division; and I ask with confidence, whether Mr. Okeden can produce a more satisfactory analysis from any other division in the whole county of Dorset!

[Here was a Table proving the falsehood of OKEDEN's report; but it was not necessary to insert it here.]

Lastly, I must observe, though most reluctantly, that, taken as a whole, nothing can be more unfair or unsatisfactory, than Mr. Okeden's poor-law report, if general information and correct views of the "practical operation of the poor-laws" are to be deduced from its pages, and which will appear to be the case, from a cursory glance over the surface of the same. First, with regard to

Cranbourne: in this parish, Mr. Okeden states that "the average wages are 8s. and 9s. per week; that the population consists of 2,158 persons; and that there are 13,052 acres in the parish; that there is a pottery which employs 110 persons; that the woods afford very profitable piece-work labour, in fencing, hurdling, and fagoting, at each of which employments an able-bodied man may earn from 12s. to 14s. per week; that the labourer has another great advantage, he is allowed to cut turf for himself gratis, so that his fuel costs him nothing but the labour, and its vicinity to the heath does not require carriage home." Mr. Okeden also states that "ten acres of land have lately been given up to the poor," and further, that "no distinction is made by individuals in the wages of single and married men:" and then takes credit to himself, that such a parish within his own division is in a prosperous and well-regulated condition, under such circumstances!! But let me ask any man, whether it is fair to contrast a parish, thus blessed with advantages of various kinds, as the parish of Cranbourne is beyond all doubt, with such a parish as Sturminster Newton for instance; the difference between the two parishes, being simply this: first, that in Cranbourne there are 2,158 persons apportioned to 13,052 acres, or one person only on an average to six acres of land, whilst in Sturminster Newton, there are 1,831 persons apportioned on 3,237 acres, there being little more than two acres only to each person; there are no woods where an able-bodied man can earn "8s. or 9s." much less "12s. and 14s. per week;" the poor man at Sturminster is not "allowed to cut turf for himself gratis," on the contrary he has to pay 1s. 4d. per cwt. for his coal: at Cranbourne, there is, in addition to the gardens which are attached to cottages "which border the heath," ten acres of land, apportioned to the poor by the lord of the manor: at Sturminster, the poor man gives on an average 5l. per annum for his house, without a garden, and there has been no land provided for the poor till this present time, that is from and after this present Ladyday: at Cranbourne there is a pottery employing 110 persons, at Sturminster there is no pottery, merely a brick-yard employing about four or five persons of the parish, and this in the spring and summer only; at Cranbourne, the able-bodied (all of whom appear to be employed) earn in ordinary cases 8s. and 9s., and in other cases the "very profitable wages of 12s. and 14s. per week:" at Sturminster there are generally fifty, always forty men out of employ, who are paid thus: single men, 2s. 6d. per week, for their week's work; married men and their wives, 4s. 6d. for the same all the year round: and yet with these differences, a contrast is attempted to be drawn by Mr. Okeden between the two parishes, as if they were in circumstances exactly parallel: and as if there was no more need of "magisterial interference".

in the one case than in the other! Mr. Okeden next illustrates the value of non-interference on the part of magistrates, by presenting us with a description of the highly moral and well-regulated condition of *his own parish*: the parish of *More Critchell*. But what is the state of that parish, as shown by Mr. Okeden? There are 1,860 acres in *More Critchell*, and a population of 304 persons; *being six acres and more to each inhabitant*? There are only "about twenty-five men and ten boys able for the field and barn work," according to the report; *it is therefore quite certain that these persons cannot be sufficient to do the work of the parish; and which I have heard from unquestionable authority to be the case.* Mr. Okeden boasts, as well he might, (for to him and to Mr. Sturt, the two sole proprietors, the greatest credit is due for the management of their parish.) that "*there are never any men out of employ*," and then takes credit to himself that "*there is no scale nor make-up system.*" But Mr. Okeden ought to have assigned the reason, and that a very simple one, viz. that in such a parish, with the advantages of high wages, full employ, a deficient population when compared with the extent of acres requiring cultivation, where "every cottage has a large garden," and where "potato land is let to the labourers by the farmer at the usual rate;" where "*for any extra job, application for labour is made to the neighbouring parishes*;" "*where no increase of cottages is allowed above the requisite habitation required for the sufficiency of the labourers of the parish*;" in short, where every thing is done by the praiseworthy and most excellent proprietors above named, to KEEP UP THE MORAL EXCELLENCE OF THE PEOPLE, AND TO KEEP DOWN THE PRESSURE AND INCREASE OF THE POPULATION, AND OF THE POOR-LAWS. Mr. Okeden ought to have stated that in a parish so regulated, the application of the "scale and make-up system" does not take place, *simply because it is not wanted; and according to the nature of things cannot take place by possibility!* But to produce such a parish as an illustration of the "*practical operation*" of the poor-law system, under ordinary circumstances, or as a parish fit and proper to be compared to Sturminster Newton, with its forty able-bodied men out of employ all the year round; or to compare such a parish with the town of Stalbridge, in our division, where the pauper population is situated very nearly in the same unfortunate condition, or even with the parish of Hasilbury Bryan, or the generality of parishes in our division, where there are NO RESIDENT LANDLORDS, is not only unfair and impracticable, but in the way of argument, absolutely ridiculous. Again, as to the comparative superiority of the state and condition of the towns and parishes of Poole and Bridport, in favour of the existence of which Mr. Okeden has given his opinion in the concluding portion of his report, and as to whether "*the poor of boroughs*" "*where little or no magisterial interference*

"takes place, being superior in moral character and appearance to the majority of country parishes," and which opinion Mr. Okeden has illustrated and confirmed by adding the instances of Poole and Bridport, in this county, I can only say, that when it is considered that Poole and Bridport are seaport towns, where trade is known to flourish to a very great extent, and where there are outlets of various kinds and descriptions for the surplus population of each town and parish, the well-doing and want of distress amongst the lower orders of such towns and parishes will easily be accounted for, and as readily believed: but if Mr. Okeden means to affirm, that there is a lesser amount of crime amongst the lower orders of the several towns within this county, than in the "*majority of parishes*" within it, and even within our own division of Sturminster Newton, I beg leave respectfully to deny that statement; affirming, as I do, that there are at least ten or twelve parishes out of the twenty constituting this very division, where a pauper is never known to be brought to the petty sessions for the commission of the smallest offence, least of all to the quarter sessions, or to the assizes: and lastly, that I for one, though I entertain and profess the highest respect for them, will never allow that in any one department of their office, are the duties which devolve upon them more discreetly or correctly executed by the justices of boroughs than by the justices of counties, by those of the county of Dorset pre-eminently above all others.

I cannot conclude these observations without expressing my deep regret at finding myself opposed on such a subject and in such a manner to a gentleman so generally respected as Mr. Okeden: but, in defence of our character as justices, and in defence of a system of legal practice, on the JUDICIOUS CONTINUATION of which I for one believe that the security and existence of the very frame-work of society depend; I say that silence on my part would have been guilty acquiescence, and a tacit approbation of charges and of doctrines which I repudiate from my very heart. I beg most distinctly to declare, however, that I believe these errors and misapprehensions of Mr. Okeden's to be perfectly unintentional and inadvertent on his part; and that Mr. Okeden was not aware, in framing this report, that he was doing otherwise than what he thought he had a right to do, reasoning from certain facts and premises before him, *such as they were.* But Mr. Okeden must be informed that we could not and ought not to be indifferent to a series of severe censures proceeding from a gentleman clothed with the authority of an assistant-commissioner, and that to affirm that one division in a whole county is the "*worst regulated as to poor concerns*," and that in a particular parish the justices of the same division "*have done all in their power to counteract and thwart*" the rector of that parish, merely because he appealed to a certain rate, with which, as it turn

out, they had nothing to do—is beyond all doubt to impugn the magisterial agency of those justices in the most sweeping and wholesale manner, and at the same time to assail the purity of their motives and the uprightness of their conduct as gentlemen. I will also take the liberty of adding that if his Majesty's Poor-law Commissioners misled or misinformed by Mr. Okeden, should be induced to bring in and to pass a law, whereby the able-bodied labourers of this kingdom shall be deprived, under the pressure of occasional distress and non-employment, of that salutary relief which the present poor-laws afford them, I am convinced that they will drive into a servile war the starving millions who will be goaded by hunger, by oppression, and by the lamentation of their children crying for bread, to the extremity of resistance, and that the rebellion in arms, of men and multitudes fighting for existence, will be chargeable upon their heads. Mr. Okeden, when sitting on a memorable occasion by our side, once heard a clergyman of a certain town within our division declare, upon oath to us, at Sturminster Newton, that the dogs in his kennel were better fed and lodged than the paupers of that town; and I would ask Mr. Okeden, I would ask him as a Christian, in the language of scripture, "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" And I would ask him, as a gentleman of kindness and consideration, how such a system of cruelty, neglect, and wretchedness, such as we all know to exist in many parishes in England, is to be amended, and is to be put down, but by the occasional exercise of "magisterial interference?"

I will only add, that although I have had reason to lament, to be grieved, and to be surprised at the charges which have emanated from misguided, ill-informed, or disaffected persons, against the conduct and character of the magistracy of this kingdom, I could not have been brought to believe, if my own eyes had not been my witnesses, that any reflections upon the justices of this county would have been made by any one (by a magistrate of that county above all others) without the most substantial and unquestionable evidence to support and to uphold them. Least of all did I think, that as a return for the unremitting and anxious and laborious exertions, in discharge of my magisterial duties, covering the period too of twenty years, during which time scarcely a single order or decision of mine or of my honourable and most highly respectable colleagues, has been called in question, much less reversed by appeal or otherwise. I repeat it, and I do so with emotions of regret deeper and more poignant than I can really give utterance to, that I did not expect to have "lived and seen this day," when, as a return for those exertions, I and my brother justices should have been presented by Mr. Okeden with the unsparing

measure of his censure and condemnation, grounded upon testimonies and proofs which we hold to be insufficient, applied against us as they have also been, without an opportunity having been afforded us either of defence or explanation. We have, however, made our appeal to our country, to his Majesty's poor-law commissioners, and to the CANDOUR OF MR. OKEDEN, feeling assured, satisfied, and convinced that the GOLDEN SCALES OF JUSTICE WILL STRIKE THE BALANCE IN OUR BEHALF.

Stock-house, Dorset, 13. May, 1833.

P. S. I feel it right to add, that I have submitted this statement of facts AS A DEFENCE ON THE PART OF THE JUSTICES OF THE STURMINSTER DIVISION IN THIS COUNTY, to the whole six magistrates with whom I have the honour to act in this division; who have not disapproved of any thing therein contained. And that if any error should be proved to exist, I shall promptly and humbly endeavour to amend, and to express my regret at the existence of the same.

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

INCOME.

For one Year to 5. Jan. 1833.			
	£.	s.	d.
CUSTOMS AND EXCISE.			
Spirits.—Foreign.....	1,857,717	14	7
Rum	1,580,380	3	9
British	5,163,178	16	0½
Malt	4,825,120	0	10
Beer	6,892	9	11
Hops	294,325	17	7
Wine	1,715,809	14	6
Sugar and Molasses	4,648,990	5	7
Tea	3,509,834	13	7
Coffee.....	598,038	5	11
Tobacco and Snuff	3,080,588	13	3
	27,280,876	15	6½
Butter	128,293	16	5
Cheese	69,049	2	8
Currants and Raisins	465,144	4	2
Corn	307,988	2	3
Cotton Wool and Sheep's imported	728,718	2	10
Silks	194,523	16	2
Printed Goods	3,375	4	10½
Hides and Skins.....	43,190	1	5
Paper	758,761	17	5
Soap	1,187,550	10	7½
Candles and Tallow	236,503	17	1
Coals, Sea borne	54,420	1	10
Glass	575,680	15	2½
Bricks, Tiles, and Slates	325,256	18	2½
Timber	1,238,289	8	8
Auctions	227,235	14	6½
Excise	897,358	7	5
Miscellaneous Duties of Customs and Excise ..	1,689,265	5	6
	9,130,605	7	4
Total Customs and Excise	36,411,482	2	10½

STAMPS.

Deeds and other Instruments.....	1,452,312	6	11½
Probates and Legacies ..	2,023,432	12	7
Insurance { Marine	310,223	11	3
{ Fire	896,948	1	5½
Bills of Exchange, Banker's Notes, &c.....	626,959	16	9½
Newspapers and Advertisements	643,888	0	6
Stage Coaches	414,033	4	11
Post Horses	245,068	16	5
Receipts	212,496	17	10½
Other Stamp Duties	288,528	14	7½

7,119,892 3 4½

ASSESSED AND LAND TAXES.

Land Taxes	1,184,340	4	1½
Houses	1,390,984	11	5½
Windows	1,202,931	0	11½
Servants	307,181	19	6
Horses	419,786	8	9
Carriages	408,414	14	6
Dogs	177,966	4	0
Other Assessed Taxes....	242,081	4	7

5,333,686 7 10½

Total Customs and Excise	36,411,482	2	10½
Stamps	7,119,892	3	4½
Assessed and Land Taxes	5,333,686	7	10½
Post Office	2,175,291	8	7½
Crown Lands	359,524	15	9
Other ordinary Revenues and other Resources ..	286,945	7	8

Grand Total 51,686,822 6 2

EXPENDITURE.

REVENUE CHARGES OF COLLECTION.

	£	s.	d.
Customs—Civil Departments	815,021	10	8
Preventive Service	360,330	14	0½
Total	1,175,352	4	8½
Excise	992,761	11	1
Stamps	182,358	0	10½
Assessed and Land Taxes	219,212	6	9½
Other ordinary Revenues (except the Post-office)	23,248	14	7
Superannuation and other Allowances	393,585	13	11½

Total Revenue.... 2,986,518 12 0½

PUBLIC DEBT.

Interest of permanent Debt	23,982,044	9	7½
* Actual Charge for Terminable Annuities	1,842,182	13	2
Ditto Life Annuities and Annuities for terms of years	1,596,427	7	0
Interest of Exchequer Bills	659,165	6	6
Management	271,533	1	10½

Total Debt..... 28,351,352 18 1½

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Civil List—Privy Purse, Salaries of the Household, and Tradesmen's Bills	441,800	0	0
The Allowances to the Junior branches of the Royal Family, and to H.R.H. Leopold, Prince of Coburg	220,000	0	0
The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland	37,435	16	5½
The Salaries and other Expenses of the Houses of Parliament (including Printing)	45,464	3	8
Civil Departments, exclusive of those in Army, Navy, and Ordnance Estimates	356,228	7	7
Other Pensions on the Consolidated Fund and on the Gross Revenue..	318,784	15	6½
Pensions, Civil List	75,000	0	0
Total Civil Government..	1,564,713	3	3½

JUSTICE.

Courts of Justice	437,784	16	0
Police and Criminal Prosecutions	217,029	14	0
Correction.—Convicts at Home and Abroad	139,323	16	0½
Ditto New South Wales	137,788	16	0
Other Expenses..	57,549	6	5

Total Justice 989,476 8 5½

DIPLOMATIC.

Salaries and Retired Allowances of Foreign Ministers	197,489	17	9½
Ditto, ditto, Consuls.....	93,223	6	4
Civil Contingencies, Expenses	39,726	15	6

Total Diplomatic 330,439 19 7½

FORCES.

Army.—Number of Effective Men.....	(89,690)		
Charge	4,347,390	1	7
Number of Non-effective Men..	(90,868)		
Charge	2,790,091	17	5
Total Army	7,137,481	19	0
Ordnance.—Number of Effective Men....	(12,237)		
Charge.....	1,073,211	0	0
Number of Non-effective Men	(12,821)		
Charge	351,477	0	0

(Total Ordnance 1,424,688 0 0

Navy. —Number of Effective Men				(28,759)			
Charge	3,265,306	8	1				
Number of Non-effective Men ..				(29,294)			
Charge	1,613,328	6	6				
Total Navy	4,878,634	14	7				
Total Forces	13,440,804	13	7				
Revenue	2,986,518	12	0½				
Debt	28,351,352	18	1½				
Civil Government ..	1,564,713	3	3½				
Justice	989,476	8	5½				
Diplomatic	330,439	19	7½				
Bounties for promoting Fisheries, Linen Manufactures, &c.	79,528	16	8½				
Public Works	345,184	17	2				
Payments out of the Revenue of Crown Lands, for Improvements and various Public Services ..	297,499	10	7½				
Post-office Charges of Collection and other payments	707,288	19	3½				
Quarantine and Warehousing Establishments ..	215,538	11	3				
Miscellaneous Services, not classed under the foregoing heads, consisting of Grants of Parliament, Payments out of the gross Revenue, Consolidated Fund, and Civil List	1,076,771	17	6				
Grand Total	50,385,118	7	7½				

From the LONDON GAZETTE,

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 1833.

BANKRUPTS.

ALLENBY, H., George - street, Adelphi, boarding-house-keeper.
 DAVIES, P., Fishguard, Pembrokeshire, shopkeeper.
 HILL, B., Oxford, hatter.
 HORTON, G., Birmingham, builder.
 FOWLER, W., Cirencester, printer.
 TAYLOR, F., Webber-street, Blackfriars-road, victualler.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATION.

HAIG, J. Glasgow, brewer.

TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1833.

INSOLVENTS.

CASE, J. R., Hunter - street, Brunswick-square, grocer.
 FLUDE, T. S., Mincing-lane, wine-broker.

BANKRUPTCY ENLARGED.

KABERRY, J., Leeds, leather-cutter.

BANKRUPTS.

CHRISTMAS, T., New Church-street, Lissou-grove, flour-dealer.
 DELEMAINE, W., Wells-street, Marylebone, wine-merchant.
 HOLT, H., Somerset-street, Portman-square, bookseller.
 MOORE, J., Manchester, glass-merchant.
 PEEL, S., Leeds, plaid-manufacturer.
 ROBERTS, J., Llandilo, Carmarthenshire, linen-draper.
 ROVEDINO, T., Manchester-street, Manchester-square, music-publisher.
 STRANGMAN, J., Queen-street, Cheapside, flour-factor.
 STEVENS, R., Newgate-street, victualler.
 TAYLOR, J. A., George-street, Hanover-square, boarding and lodging-house-keeper.

LONDON MARKETS.

MARK-LANE, CORN-EXCHANGE, July 1.—The arrivals fresh up to this morning's market were very moderate, but added to the supplies remaining on hand from last week, caused the stands to be well filled with samples. The millers took the better parcels rather more freely than on Friday, at the currency of this day se'nnight; and sweet, fresh-thrashed, inferior parcels were saleable at a decline of about 1s., but all stale descriptions, and those out of condition, were difficult to quit at a reduction of 2s. to 3s., per qr. Old Corn met little inquiry, and prices were nominally unaltered. In bonded Wheat we heard of no business transacting, though purchases might have been effected on lower terms.

Barley was in limited request. The best descriptions supported last Monday's rates, but inferior and stained qualities were 1s. to 2s. per qr. cheaper, with a slow sale.

Malt dull, and prices nominally the same.

Owing to the extensive supplies of Oats the preceding week, with some fresh arrivals this morning, caused the trade to rule heavy at a decline of 1s. to 2s. on the terms of last Monday.

Beans were fully 1s. per qr. cheaper, and dull at this decline.

White Peas were quite as dear as this day week, and the supplies very limited. Grey were 1s. to 2s. lower.

Flour proved a heavy trade, and the millers are again complaining of the disparity that exists in the price of Wheat and the manufactured article.

Wheat 54s. to 62s.
 Rye 32s. to 34s.
 Barley 25s. to 27s.
 — fine 28s. to 31s.

Peas, White.....	32s. to 34s.
—— Boilers.....	38s. to 44s.
—— Grey.....	33s. to 35s.
Beans, Small.....	—s. to —s.
—— Tick.....	31s. to 33s.
Oats, Potato.....	22s. to 24s.
—— Feed.....	16s. to 20s.
Flour, per sack	48s. to 50s.

PROVISIONS.

Pork, India, new....	—s. to 110s.
—— Mess, new ...	—s. to 60s. per barl.
Butter, Belfast	—s. to —s. per cwt.
—— Carlow	—s. to —s.
—— Cork	—s. to 78s.
—— Limerick	—s. to 79s.
—— Waterford...76s.	to 78s.
—— Dublin	—s. to —s.

SMITHFIELD.—July 1.

This day's supply of Beasts and Porkers was limited; its supply of Sheep, Lambs, and Calves, moderately good. Trade was, in the whole, somewhat brisk. With Beef and Veal at an advance of from 2d. to 4d. per stone; with Mutton, Lamb, and Pork at Friday's quotations.

Full three-fifths of the beasts appeared to consist of about equal numbers of Scots, interspersed with a few Norfolk home-breds and short-horns; one fifth of about equal numbers of Devons and Welsh runts, and the remaining fifth about equal numbers of Herefordshire, Sussex, and Irish Beasts. The Scots and home-breds, chiefly from Norfolk and Suffolk, the short-horns in about equal numbers from Norfolk and Lincolnshire, with a few of these, the Devons, Herefords, Welsh runts, &c., from Leicestershire, and our western and midland districts, Kent and Sussex; as also a few Town's-end Cows, Irish beasts, &c., fattened in the neighbourhood of London.

At least three-fifths of the Sheep appeared to be new Leicesters, of the South Down and white-faced crosses, in the proportion of one of the former to three of the latter; about a fifth South Downs; about a tenth old Leicesters; and the remaining tenth about equal numbers of polled Norfolks and Kentish half-breds, with a few old Lincolns, Kents, horned Norfolks, Somersets, and Dorsets, horned and polled Scotch and Welsh Sheep, &c. About a moiety of the Lambs appeared to be new Leicesters, principally of the South Down crosses; and the remainder about equal numbers of Downs and Dorsets, with a few Kentish half-breds, &c.

MARK-LANE.—Friday, July 5.

The arrivals this week are moderate. The prices full as high as on Monday.

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